

American Girl

September/October 2006

\$4.50

TM

Get Friendship
Advice

Throw a Spooky
Party

Make Crafts with
Friend Photos

Take a Doodle
Quiz!

Plus!
Bright ideas
for making
your classroom
cool!

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Frame Garland

See AG Online!

Visit americangirl.com
to peek behind the scenes
of AG magazine!

Always get a parent's permission
before surfing the Web or giving out
your full name, address, or any
other personal info.



From the Heart

Meet a girl who got
to see how her life
might have been
very different.

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Ghou! Café!

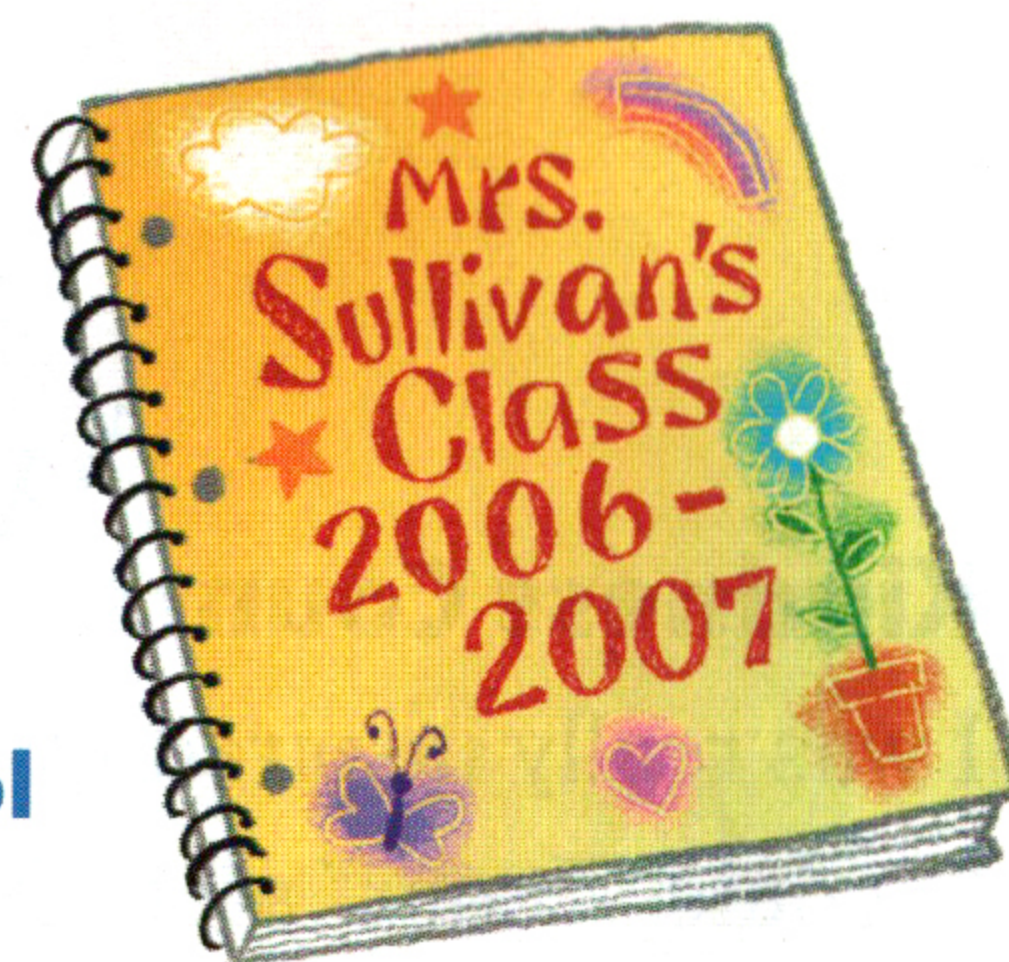
Invite your ghou!friends
over for some spirited snacks.

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About the Cover

Meet Vivianna J., age 11.

We asked her to tell us her fall favorites.

Favorite part about going back to school?

Seeing my friends and finding out who my teacher is

Favorite school supply to buy?

A mechanical pencil

Favorite after-school activity?

I'm in the school play.

Favorite way to relax?

I like to lie on my bed and listen to classical music.

Vivianna J.

For more about our cover shoot, go to "Behind the Scenes" on page 49.



Pencil Mania

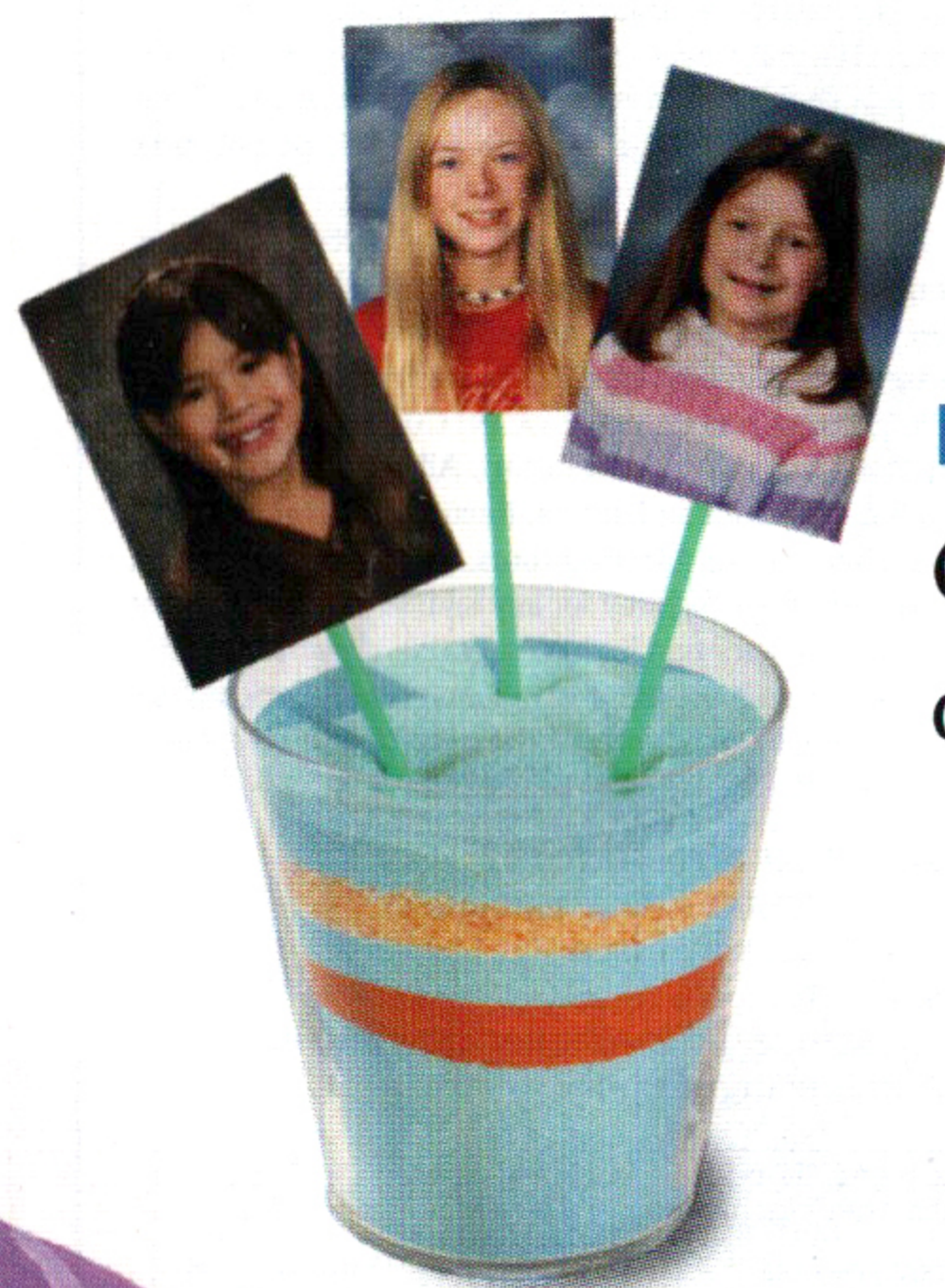
See some amazing decorated pencils made by girls like you!

8

Friend Photos

Clever ways to display school pictures

24



Letters from You

Kindness Counts

I was really inspired by the "Scouts' Honor" story in the May/June 2006 issue. I am a Girl Scout, too, and I am amazed by what these girls did with their money and time to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. I really hope that I can make a difference like that one day through scouting, too.

Sara C.
Age 11, Arizona

Morning Stretch

One morning, I woke up feeling really stressed. I tried your "Just Breathe" exercises from May/June. They worked, and I felt great!

Katie Q.
Age 10, Illinois

Win It!

On page 15, you'll read about our latest Win It! contest. To enter, send a letter by October 16 with your first and last name and address to:

Win It!—S/O 06
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Hair Helper

I loved the idea of a "Spirit Scrunchie" from May/June. I made my own pink, turquoise, and purple one. What used to be just a yellow hair elastic is now a beautiful mix of colors to brighten up my hair!

Becca L.
Age 11, New York

Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

American Girl magazine

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

You can also send letters via e-mail to
im_agmag_editor@americangirl.com.

Either way, be sure to include your first and last name and your birth date. We can't publish every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.

Official Rules

1. Employees of American Girl and its affiliates and their families are not eligible.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by October 16, 2006. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed. A parent or guardian must sign the entry.
4. One winner will be chosen at random.
5. All entries become the property of American Girl and will not be returned.
6. Void where prohibited by law.



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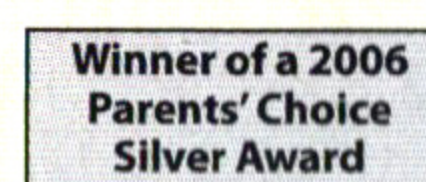
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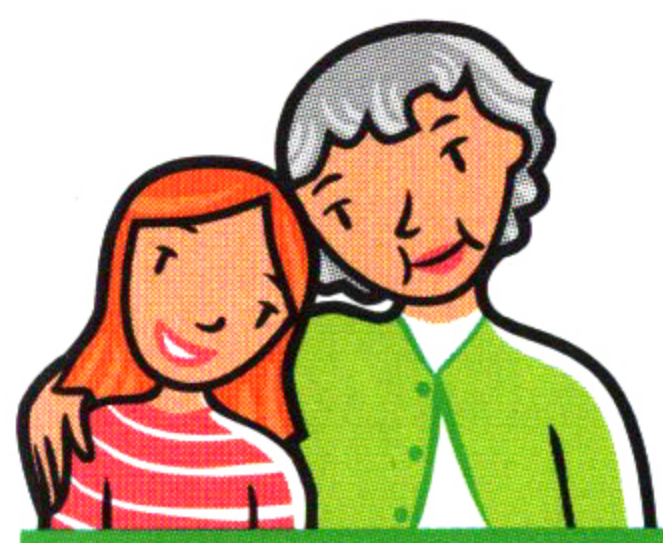


American Girl™

Girls

E X P R E S S

A Grand Plan



National Grandparents Day is September 10. Show an older relative that you care by giving a box of memories.



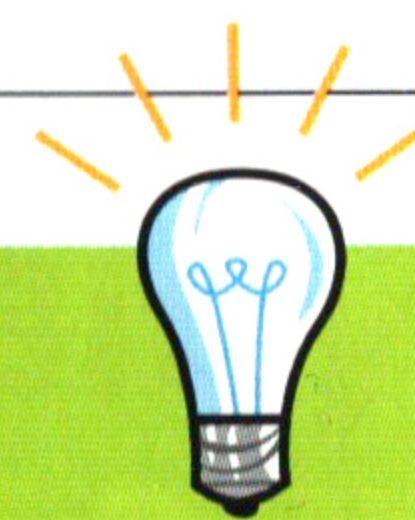
1 Cut a colorful piece of paper to fit on top of a small container. Attach the paper with double-sided tape.

2 Write favorite memories of your grandparent on slips of paper or on the backs of photos. Think of sweet or funny things that happened when you were together, gifts that you gave or received, or something that one of you learned from the other. Have your siblings or cousins help, if you want.

3 Tuck the slips of paper inside the storage container and close it. Tie a pretty ribbon around it.

4 Deliver it with a smile!

You give the best hugs!



Did You Know?

You'll flip for these fun facts!

Pop! Pop! Pop!

October is National Popcorn Poppin' Month. Ever wondered why popcorn pops? When the tiny drop of water inside of each kernel is heated, it turns into steam. The hot steam causes the kernel to explode.

Buzzword chockablock



How to say it: CHOK-uh-blok

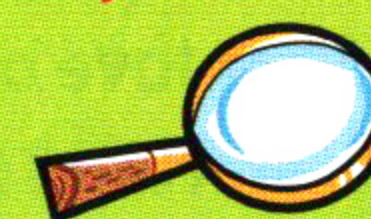
What it means: squeezed together, jammed

One way to use it: The school hallway was so chockablock with students that Bailey worried she would be late to class.



The buzzword is tucked into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? The answer is on page 42.

Find It!



Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!

True Story

Makenzee played on an all-boys football team.

Dear American Girl,

I'm a tomboy. My brothers and sisters and I played football in the yard all the time, and a couple of years ago, I joined an all-boys football team. It was hard because the boys did not want a girl on their team, so they picked on me. I didn't expect to get treated like everybody else at first, but I could beat some of the boys at some of the drills. Boys on the teams that we played made fun of me, too. Being a football player was hard enough even without the teasing, but I didn't quit. I was just glad that the coaches let me play.

The teasing stopped about the time I scored my first touchdown. My teammates finally realized that I was serious about playing. I gained their respect, and now I'm friends with them.

Playing on an all-boys team was hard, but having the chance to prove myself made it all worth it. I hope other girls will want to try it, too.

Sincerely,
Makenzee W.
Age 12, Mississippi



Makenzee played three positions!

"Different"



I like winter, and you like spring.
I like to hum, and you like to sing.
Your hair is brown, and my hair is blonde.
My hair is short, and your hair is long.
I like the ocean, and you like the bay.
We are not the same in any way.

I like baseball, and you like soccer.
I have a cubby, and you have a locker.
I like gloves, and you like mittens.
I like monkeys, and you like kittens.
I like green, and you like blue.
We are different, me and you.

But I like you, and you like me.
And that's the way our friendship should be!



Taylor M.
Age 11, South Carolina

Shining Star



Jordan's in costume, ready for a show.

Jordan S. loved her Spanish lessons, but she was frustrated that there weren't many places for her to practice speaking.

With her mom's help, the Georgia girl blended her love of acting with Spanish. She started The Children's Bilingual Theater, a group that performs in Spanish and English.

"I wanted to get the two cultures interconnected," says Jordan, 13. She and her mom found a script for the first production, called *El Canto del Roble*, or *The Song of the Oak*. It's about a kid who discovers nature, and Jordan had a starring role.

The theater troupe includes kids from many different backgrounds. The script was designed so that everyone could understand the story,

whether they spoke only Spanish or only English.

Jordan couldn't have been prouder when her group performed *El Canto del Roble* to rave reviews. "When I heard the applause, I knew my dream had become a reality!"

You can shine, too.

Learn another language!
A foreign-language course will help you to understand other cultures, and you might make new friends, too.

Get It Together

Do you go crazy trying to pick out clothes each morning?

Hang a canvas clothing organizer in your closet and try this trick for getting into your outfit and out the door quickly.



Label each shelf with a day of the week, using file folders that are trimmed to fit. Over the weekend, pick out a week's worth of clothes and place each day's outfit on its own shelf. Place important items, such as assignments or books, on the shelves along with your clothes.

Bitty Bobbies



Cut out card. Flip over for directions.

AG Poll

In our May/June issue, we asked you about your ideal sports role.

Praised player 163

Confident captain 50

Fabulous fan 40

Marvelous mascot 11

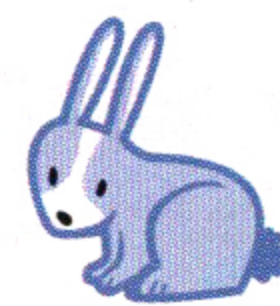


Next question:

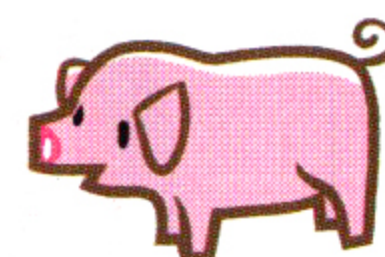
What's your favorite baby animal? Circle your choice:



Chick



Bunny



Piglet



Foal



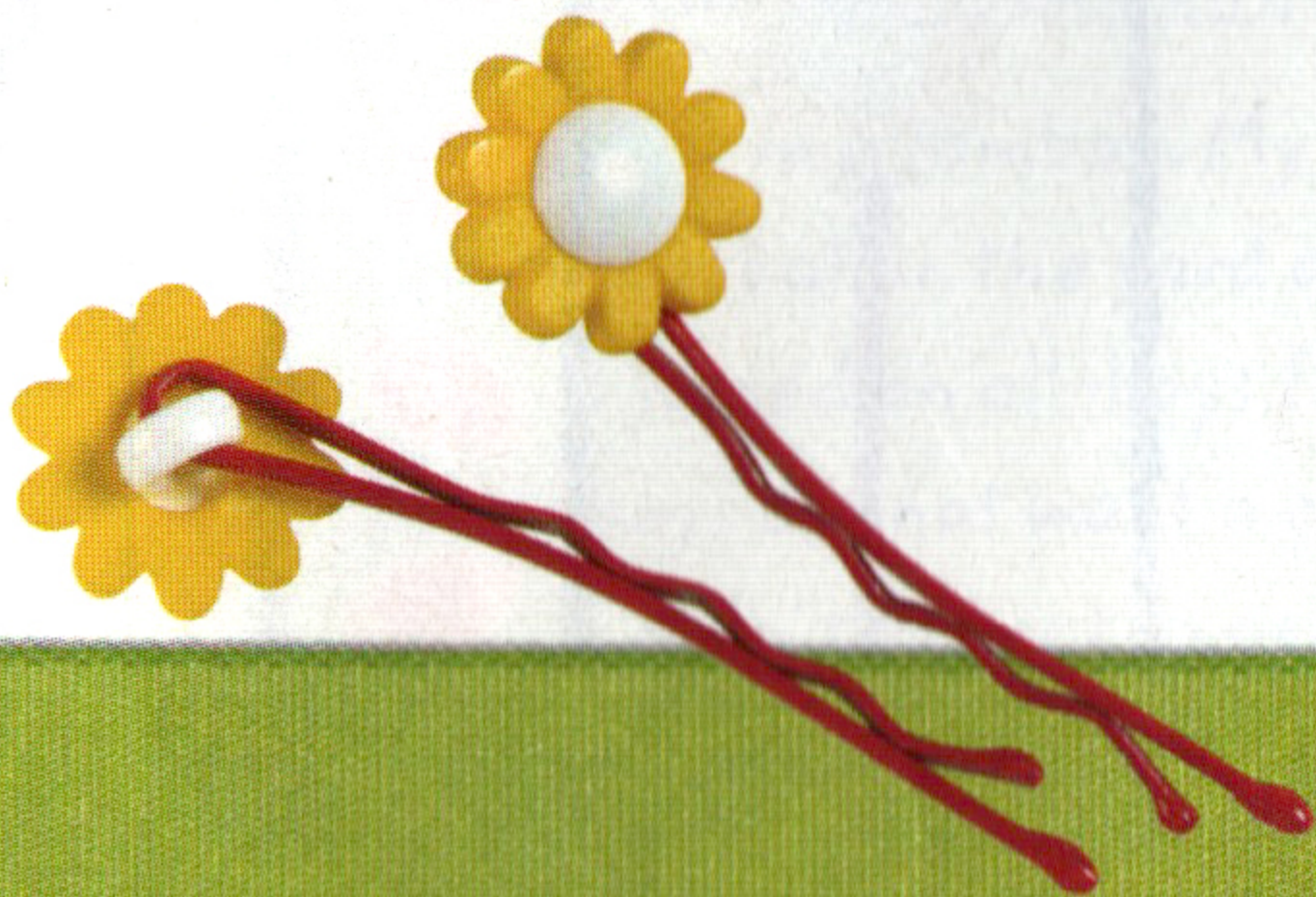
Lamb

Cut out your answer and mail it to us.



Bitty Bobbies

Slide a **shank button** (the kind with the loop on the back) onto a **fancy bobby pin**. Pin one or two into your hair for a delightful 'do.



Photos: Chris Hynes

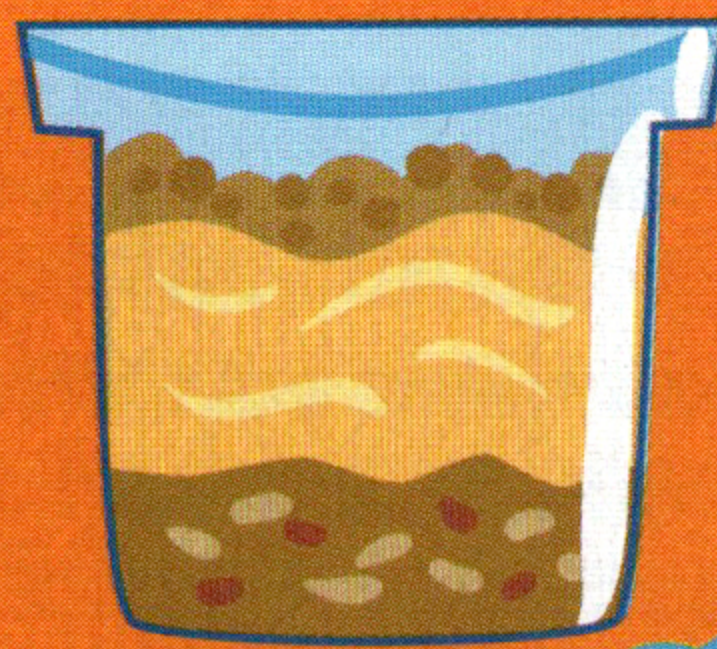
Help Wanted!

Are you a twin? A triplet? A quadruplet or a *quintuplet*? We'd like to hear from readers who have same-age siblings. What's your favorite thing about being a twin or triplet? What's the hardest part? What's the one thing you wish people would understand? Whether fraternal or identical, send a photo of you with your similar siblings and a letter telling us about all of you. Send your letter and photo to the address on page 2.



Lunch Box

Pie parfaits make lunchtime a fun time! Using crushed graham crackers for "crust," layer these ingredients in a small plastic cup.



Applesauce +
Brown Sugar =
Apple-tizing



Vanilla Yogurt +
Strawberry Slices =
Berry-licious



Chocolate Pudding +
Banana Slices =
Banana-rama

The Keys to Success

Nicolette M. usually doesn't seek out problems. But that was her dad's advice when she was entering an invention contest.

Nicolette soon found a problem. "I noticed my younger brother, Jared, was having trouble reaching the piano pedals," remembers the Virginia girl, who quickly got to work on a fix.

She first measured the distance between the pedals and his feet, and then she made sketches of ideas. Eventually, her ideas became a prize-winning invention. Nicolette's creation is a box with three wooden poles that is placed over piano pedals so that shorter children can reach them.

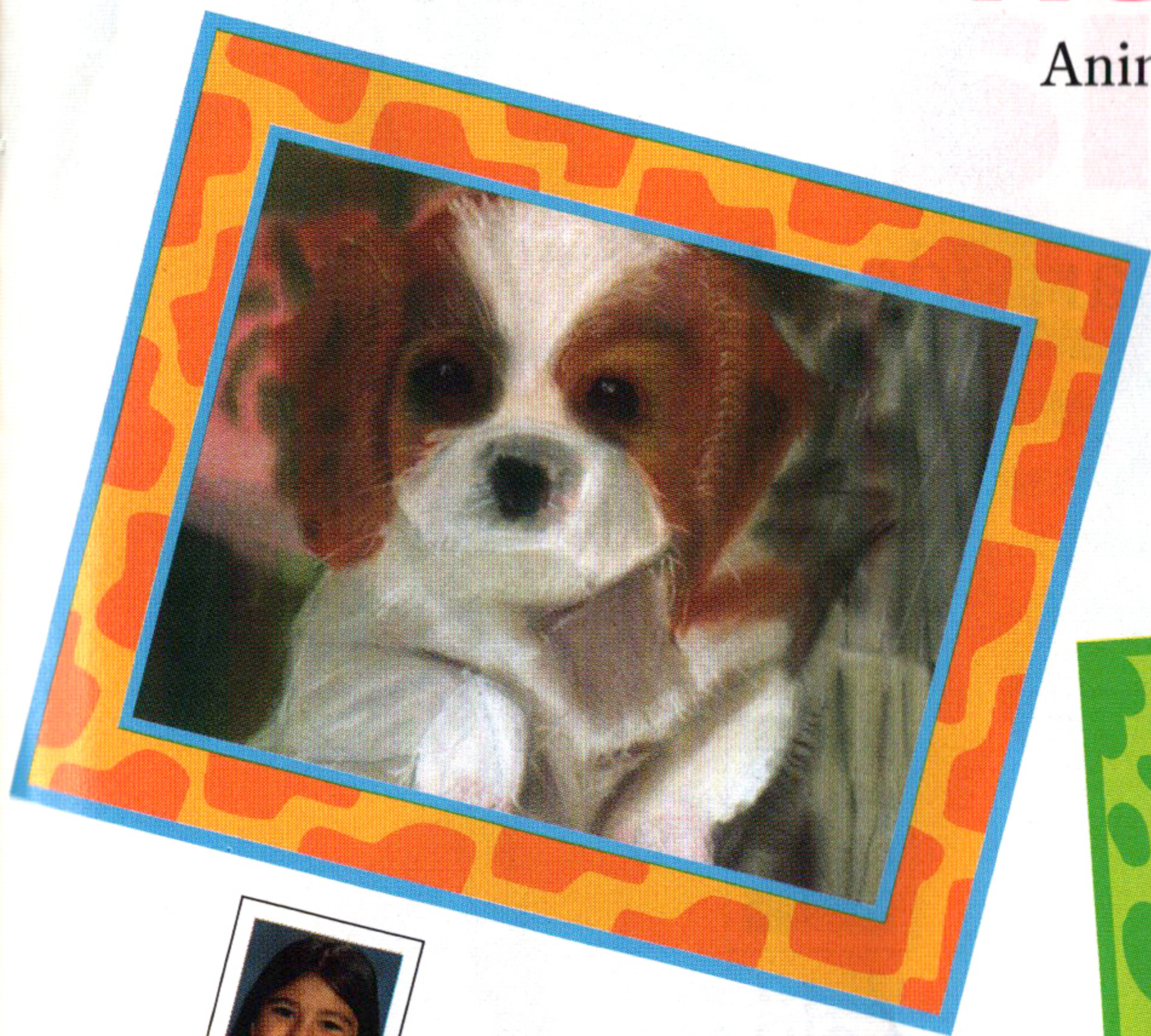
"We tested the box at Jared's piano lessons and fixed all the little problems," says Nicolette. Out of 9,000 other young inventors in the contest, she ended up winning a grand prize of a \$10,000 savings bond. She now is considering making and selling her invention to others. "It's great to know my invention can help people, including my brother!"

Nicolette and her brother demonstrate her invention.



AG Art Gallery

Animal artwork abounds this fall.



Sydney A.
Age 11, California



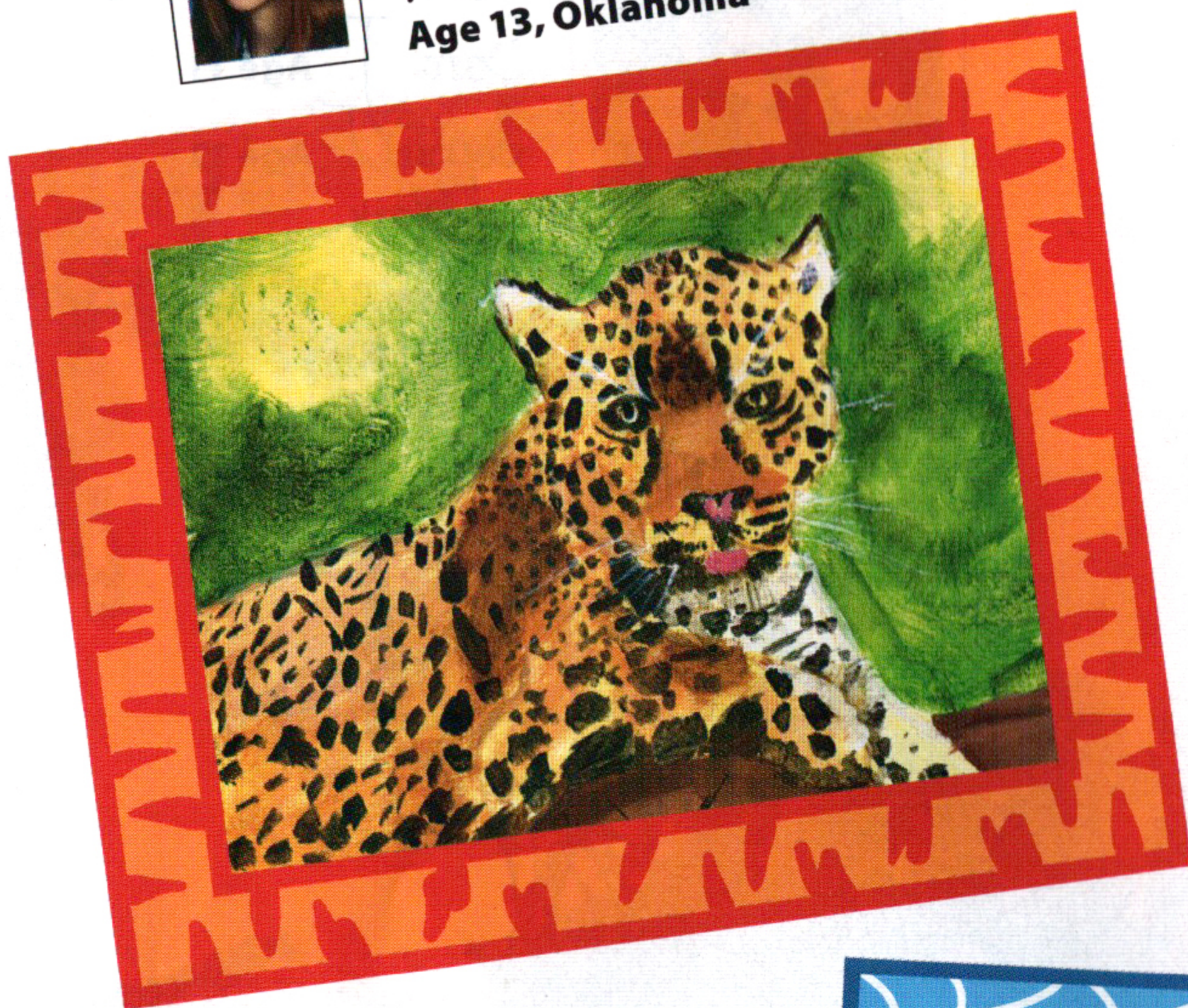
Leah H.
Age 13, Colorado



Katie J.
Age 12, Ohio



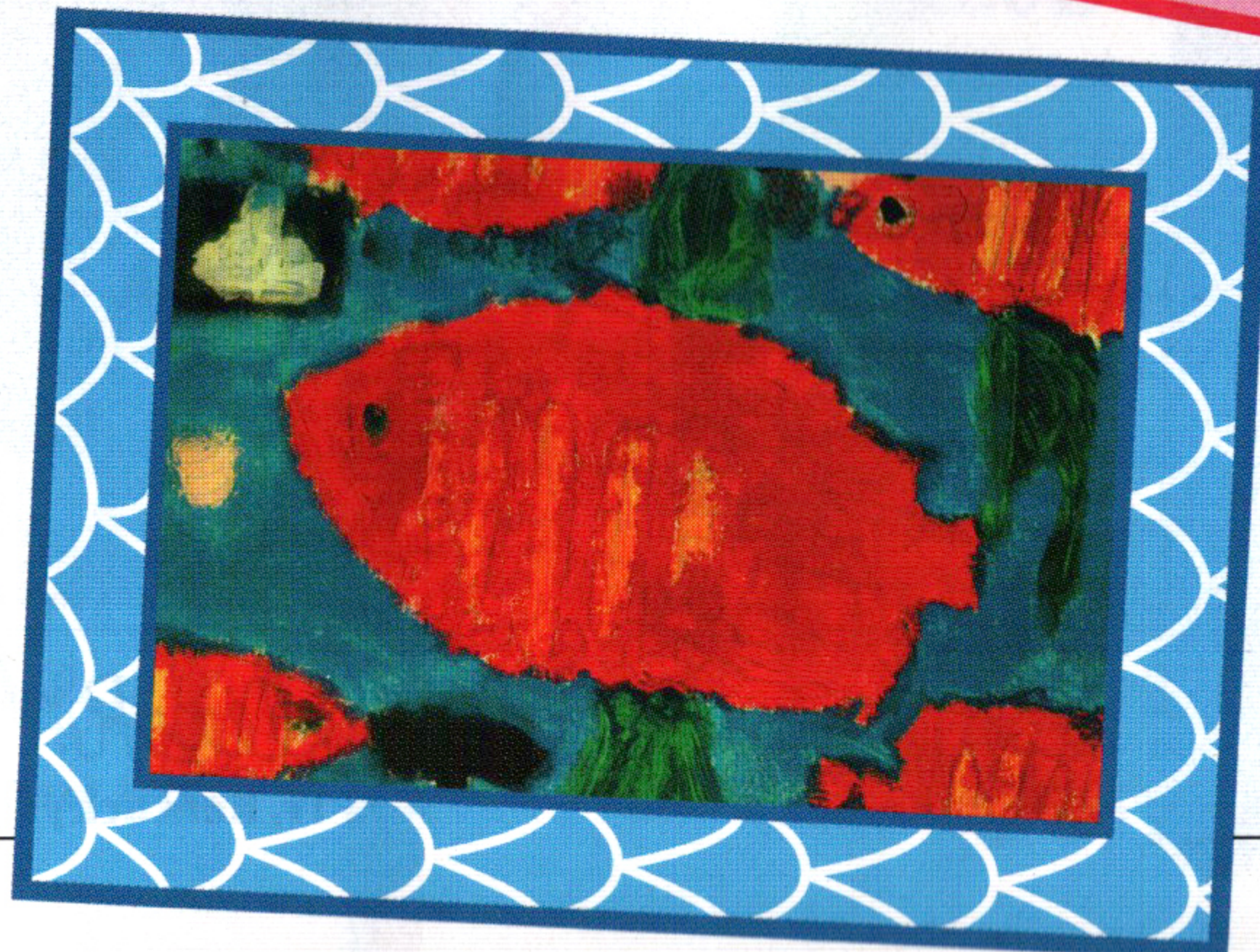
Rachel H.
Age 13, Oklahoma



Emily V.
Age 11, New York



Amber J.
Age 10, New York



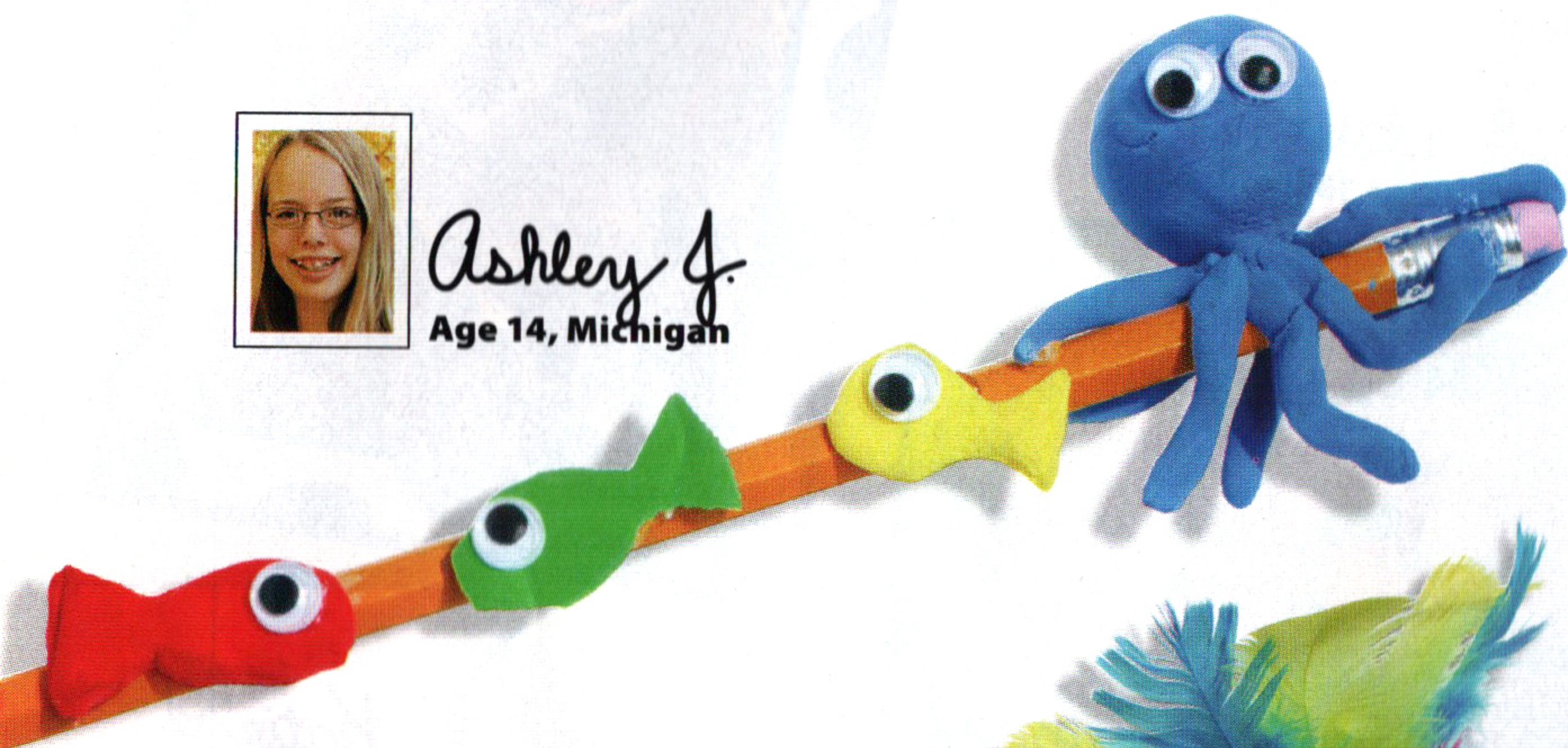
We're looking for **artwork** for our gallery. Send color **copies** of your original artwork to the address on page 2. Sorry, we can't return **entries**.

Pencil Mania

AG readers like you came up with some sharp ideas!



Ashley J.
Age 14, Michigan



Kali W.
Age 12, Indiana



Aly Z.
Age 13, California



Atlanta J. Age 10
Sara J. Age 11
Sophie T. Age 11
New York



Alyssa C.
Kaitlyn R.
Age 12, Indiana



Haley R.
Age 11, Kentucky





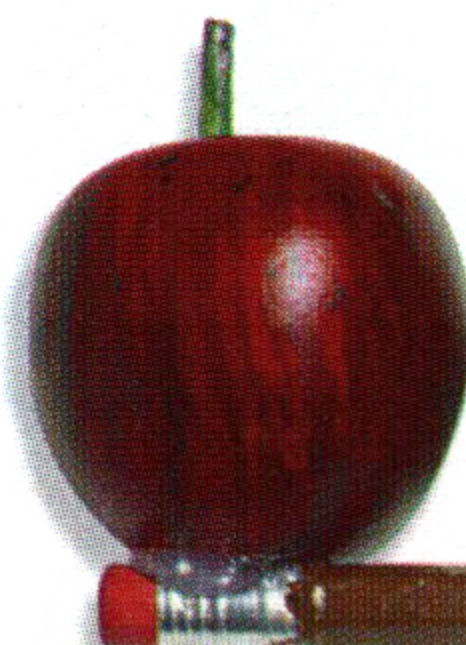
Lauren B.
Age 9, Georgia



Reagan P.
Age 9, Ohio



Bella T.
Age 9, Illinois



Alexandra K.
Age 11, New Jersey



New Contest: Look-Alikes

We did a double take when we saw this school photo from Erin S., age 13, of Minnesota. Doesn't she look just like Gwyneth Paltrow? Do you resemble someone famous, too? If so, tell us who and send your photo to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: October 10, 2006. Winners will appear in the March/April 2007 issue. Sorry, we can't return photos.



Popularity

These AG readers told us what it takes to be popular at their schools and described their experiences in dealing with popularity.



At my school the mean kids say they're popular, but they're really not. They call my friends and me the Nerd Herd.

When I told my mom what they called us, she said that my friends and I are really the popular ones because we're nice to everyone.

Farrah L.

Age 12, Ohio

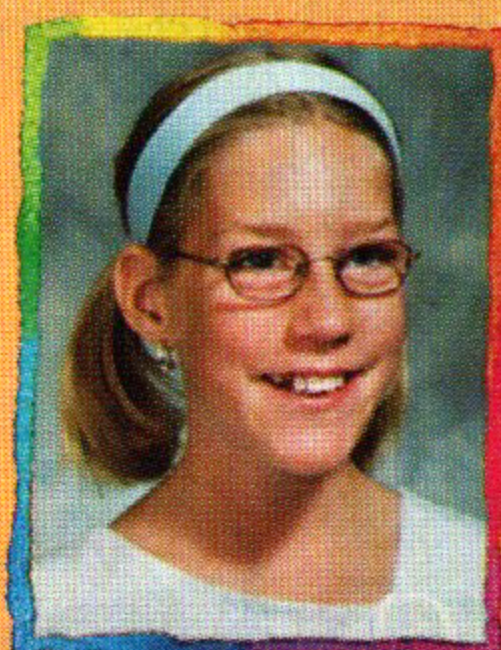


When I was in first grade, I was barely even notice-

able. Then I switched schools and started helping others. All of a sudden, I noticed that I had become popular! The best way to be known for being popular is to be known for being nice.

Katie M.

Age 12, Michigan



To me, popular means having a crowd follow

you everywhere. At my school, people get to be popular based on clothes, hairstyles, and how they talk. I'm glad I'm not popular because you don't get any time by yourself.

Whitney U.

Age 11, Michigan



Because I'm popular, people always assume that

life is perfect for me, but it's not! I get into arguments with my mom or sister once in a while, and I don't get everything I want. I'm just like everyone else and wish people would realize that.

Rachel W.

Age 13, North Carolina





For me,
there are
two kinds
of popular:

popular because you have
a lot of friends and popular
because you boss everyone
around. I am popular in the
good way.

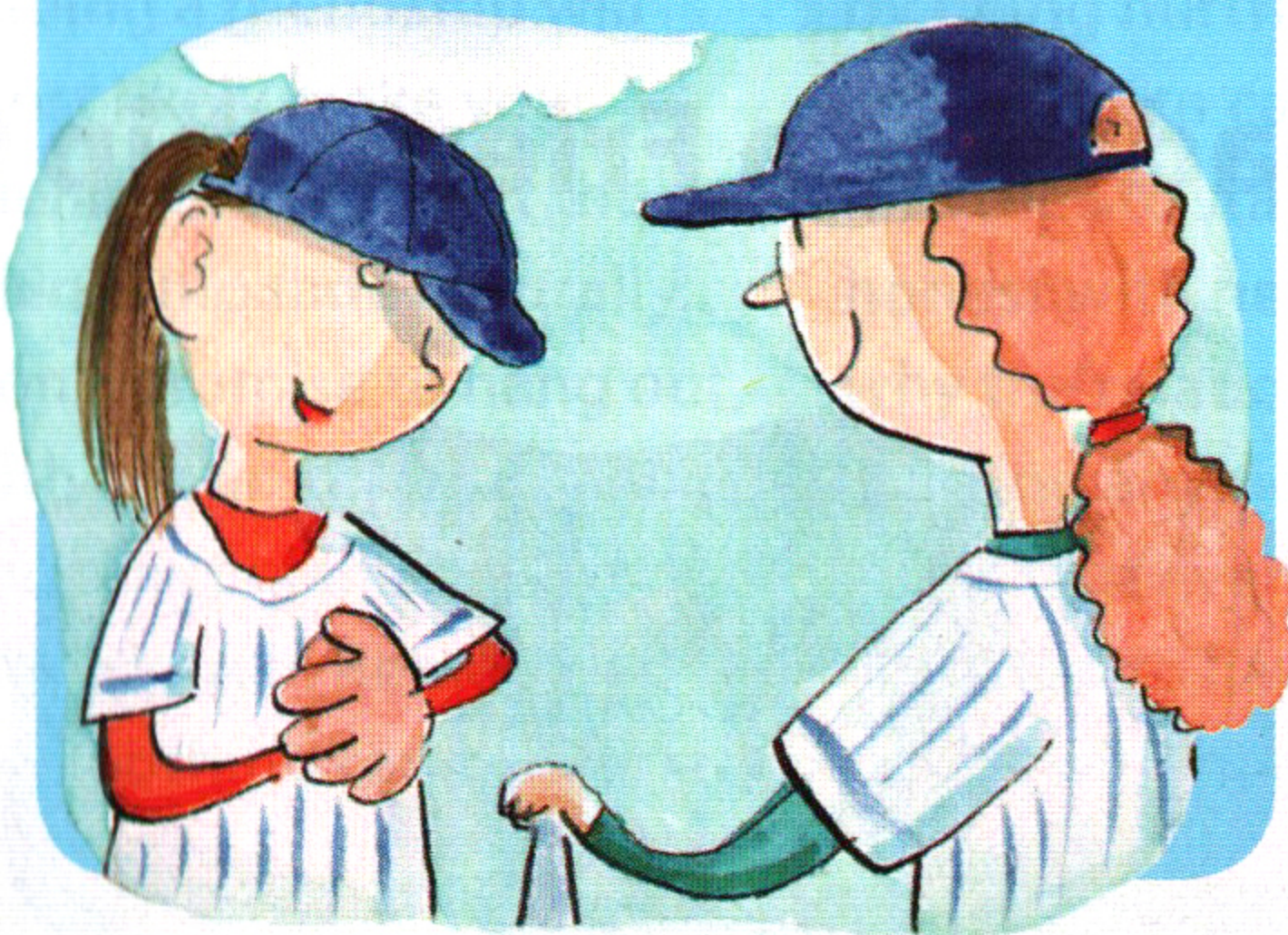
Margaret B.
Age 10, California



Last year, the
only girl on
my softball
team who

was from my school was
popular. I was scared to
talk to her at first, but I
finally got up the courage,
and we became friends.
Even if you're not "cool,"
you can talk to someone
who is.

Katie F.
Age 11, Maryland



Big Truth

Don't change
who **YOU** are
to be popular.



To be popular
at my school,
a girl has to
pretend she's

dumb, scare easily, and be
obsessed with looks. I'm
not considered popular, and
I don't care. Anyone who
acts like that won't get
much respect in life.

Julia D.
Age 13, Massachusetts



One time
I tried really
hard to be
popular and

ended up forgetting about
my friends. I realized that
I had let down the people
who liked me for me. A girl
doesn't need popularity if
she has great friends.

Ashley S.
Age 12, Kansas

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Tattling

How do you decide when to
tell on someone because an
adult needs to know and
when to work things out on
your own? Tell us a story
about a time you knew you
had to spill the beans on
someone or a time when
you handled it on your own.
Did you make the right
decision? What happened?

Send answers, name, birth
date, and school photo to
the address on page 2.

Deadline: October 7,
2006. Some answers will
appear in the March/April
2007 issue. ★





When a Friendship Ends

When friends grow apart, sometimes one person isn't ready for the friendship to end and the other person is. Here's what to do if it happens to you.

by Patti Kelley Criswell

When You Aren't Ready for a Friendship to End

Be sad...but then move on

It's absolutely O.K. to feel sad when a friendship ends. That means that the friendship meant something to you. Focus on other things to get your mind off it. Talk to a parent if you're really upset, and spend time with other friends.

It's easy to be hard on yourself when a friendship ends. Be gentle with yourself. You can't *make* anyone be your friend, so accept that this friendship is over. Use your energy to start a new friendship that might even be better for you!



When You Are Ready for a Friendship to End

Be discreet

Your other friends don't need to know about the problems you are having in this friendship. If you need to talk to someone about it, talk to a parent or another adult.



Be kind

Ending a friendship will most likely make your friend sad. Try to let the friendship fade naturally. Don't promise to hang out with her on the weekend if you don't plan on following through. Remember that nothing can be gained

by being hurtful. If she continues to call often and tries to stay close, be honest with her about why the relationship isn't working anymore. Let her know that even though you used to have fun doing things with her, you think

a break is best for now. Be aware of her feelings. You may not want to be friends, but you sure don't want to be enemies. Once the friendship has cooled off, be sure to say hello and be friendly to her.



Keep your head up

The end of a friendship is no one's fault, so don't be hard on yourself. This friendship was *one* part of your life, not your *whole* life. Remember that you are a girl worth knowing, and that there are friends out there who will appreciate and accept you for who you are. ★



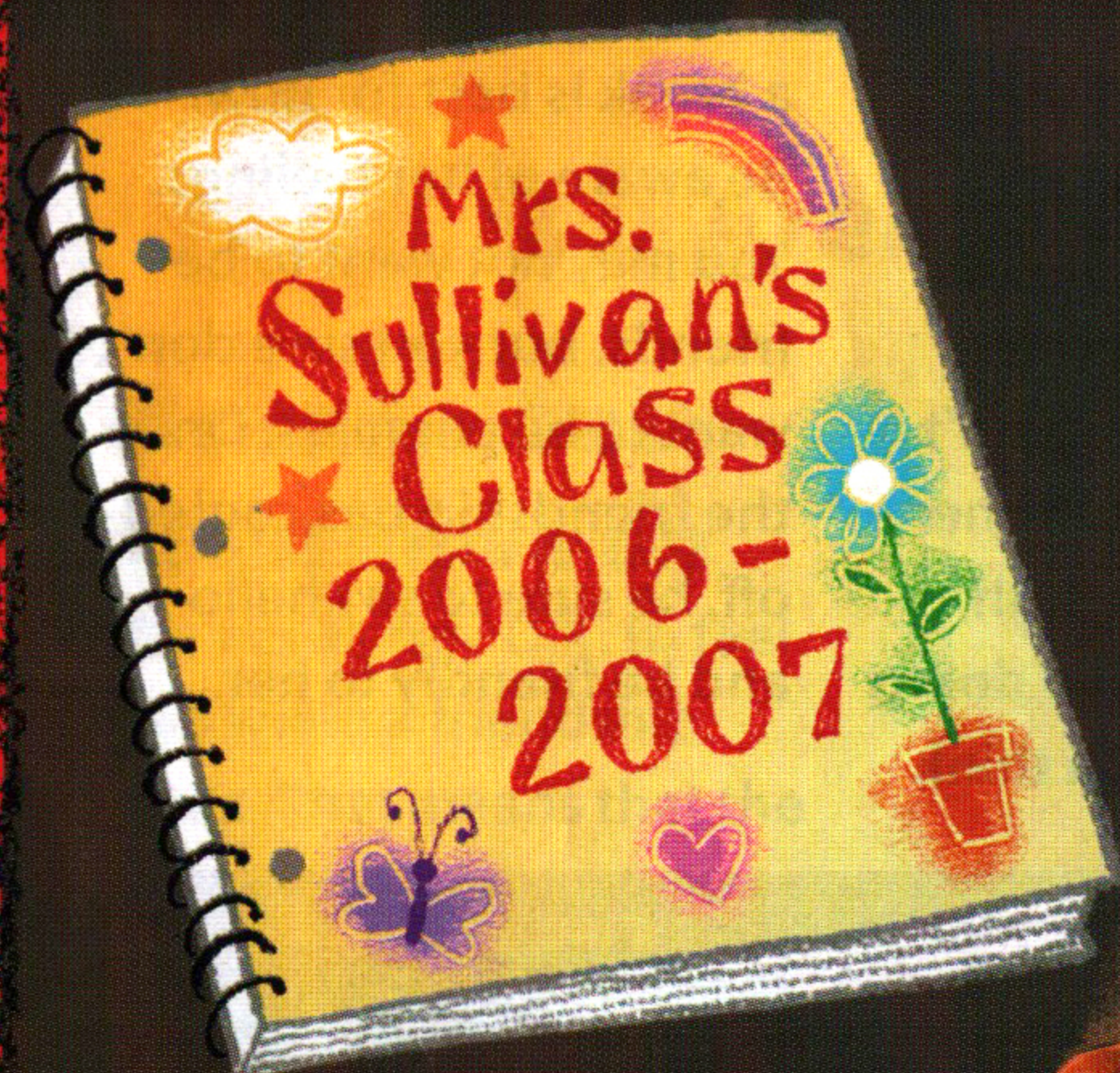
Create a Cool Classroom!

Like these ideas? See if your teacher likes them, too.

A+

Trading Spaces

Rearrange the desks for a day. If your classroom is chockablock with desks, put them in a big circle. You could arrange students in order alphabetically by first name or by birthday, too.



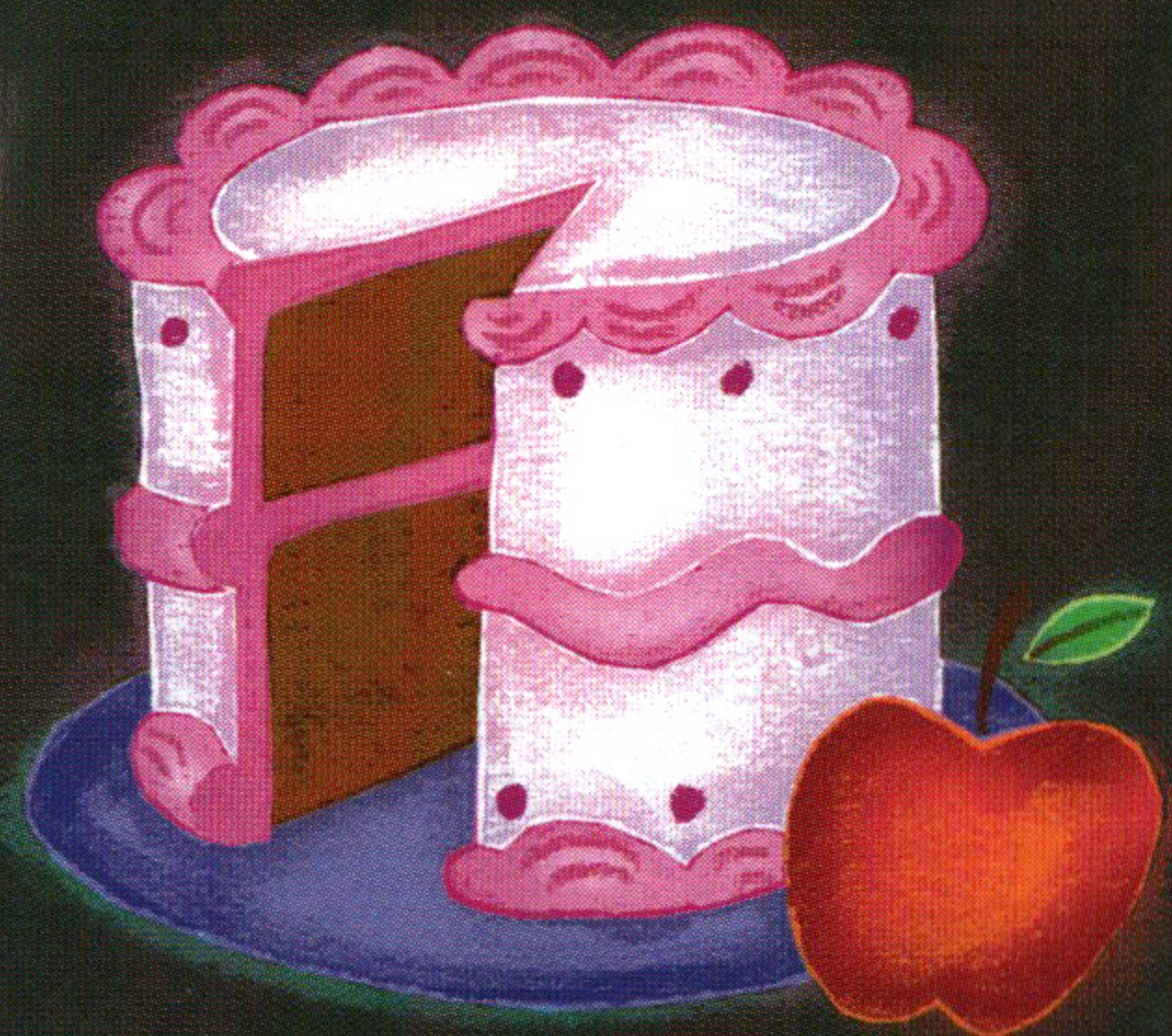
Get to Know Each Other

Create a traveling notebook for your class. Students can take turns bringing the notebook home and writing something unique about their family or something wacky they did that week. Maybe each student can add something to decorate the cover, too. This project will teach you a lot about your classmates!

Speaker Spotlight

Suggest a guest speaker day. Do you know someone who is a pilot or works at a local candy company? See if the person would be willing to talk to you and your classmates about the cool things he or she gets to do at work.





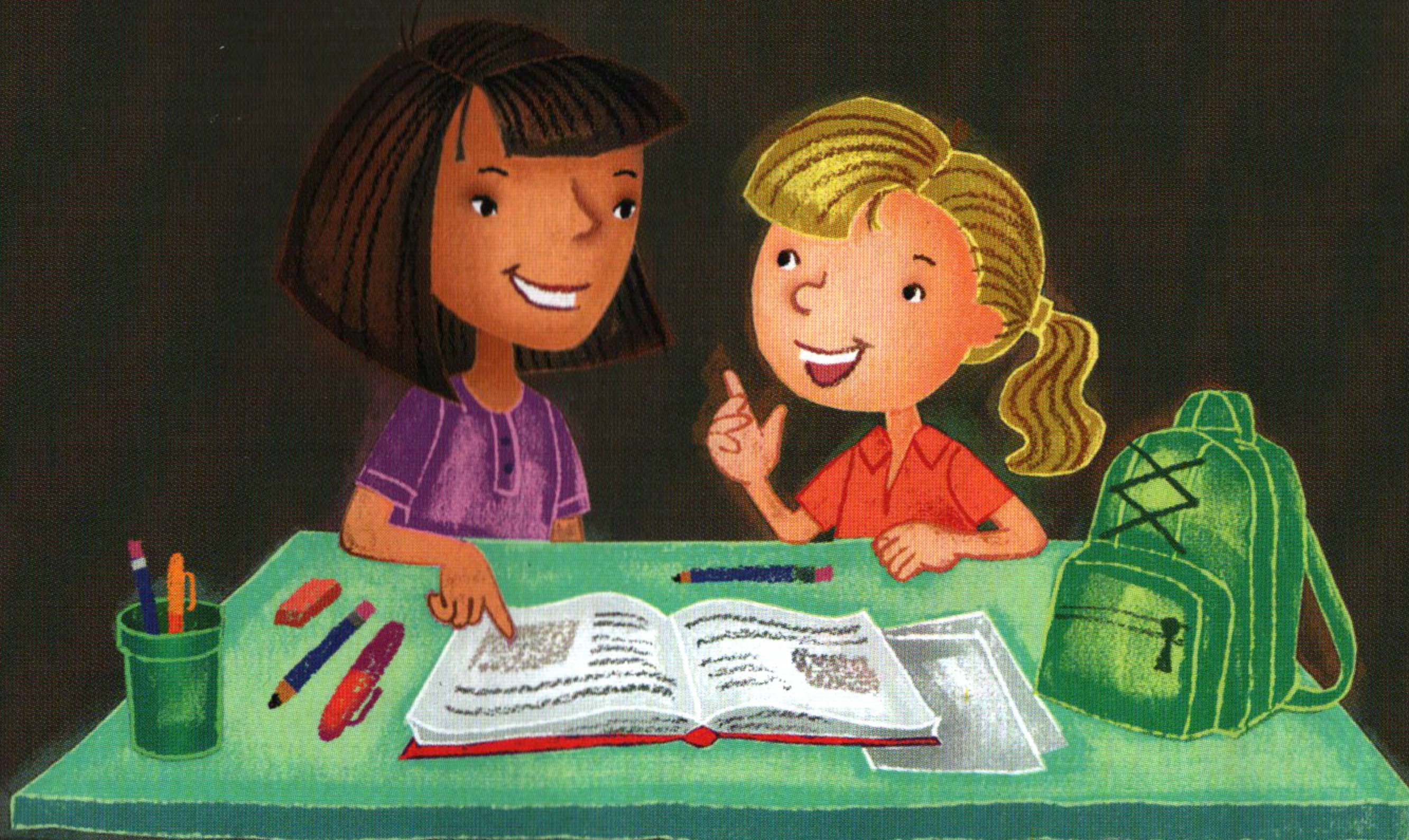
Shh... It's a Surprise!

Show your principal how much you appreciate her by staging a surprise birthday bash. Enlist the help of your teacher to find out the date of your principal's birthday. Try to figure out what her favorite kind of cake is, too!

Book Buddies

Have your class team up with a class in a lower grade at your school. Ask the teachers to pair each student in your

class with a younger student, and meet once a month to read together. Take turns picking the books.



Great Grading Gear

Bring in a pack of purple pens and some cool stickers or stamps, and organize a grading-supply bin for your teacher to use when marking papers.

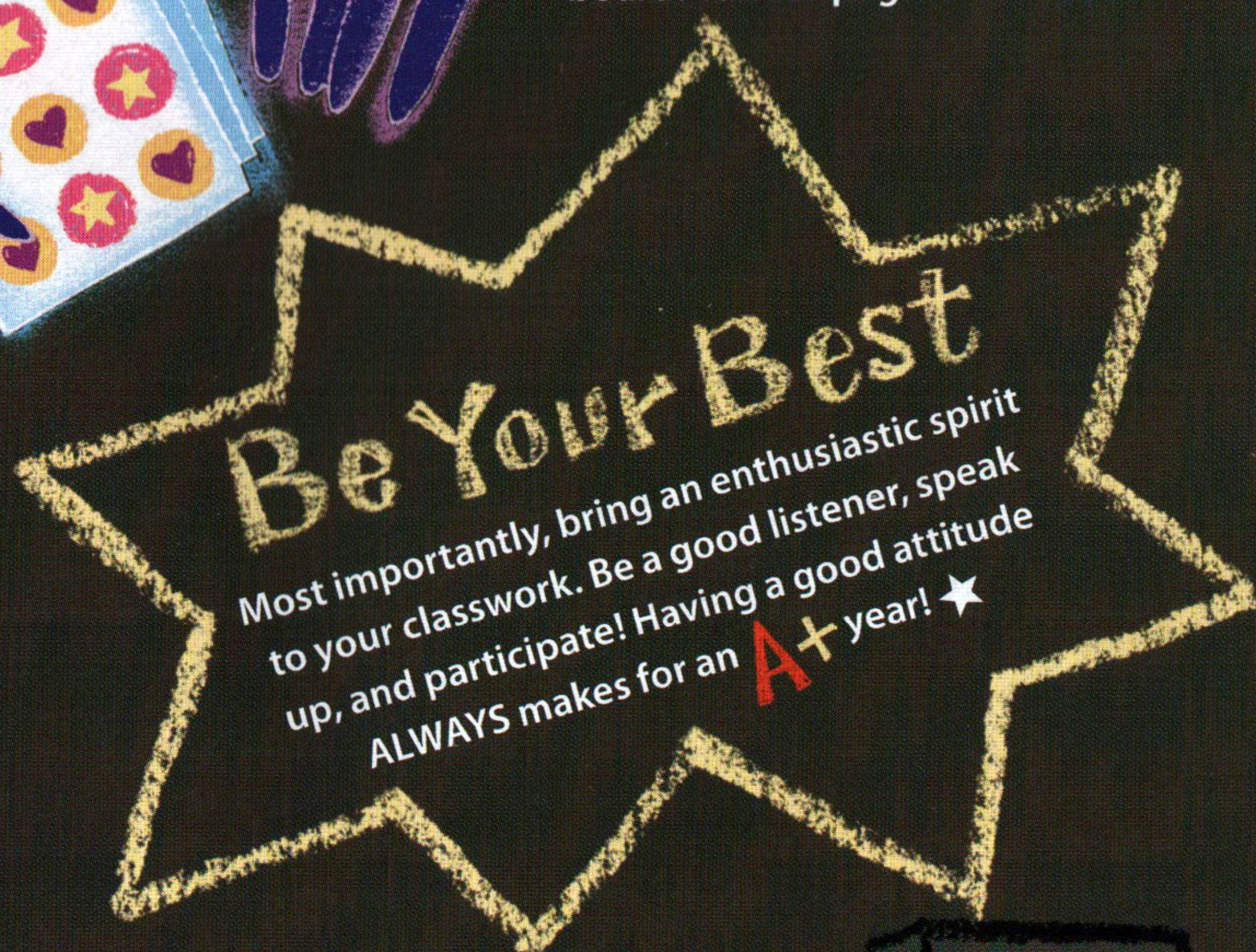


Enter for the chance to win a box full of fun supplies for making a great bulletin board! Turn to page 2 for details.

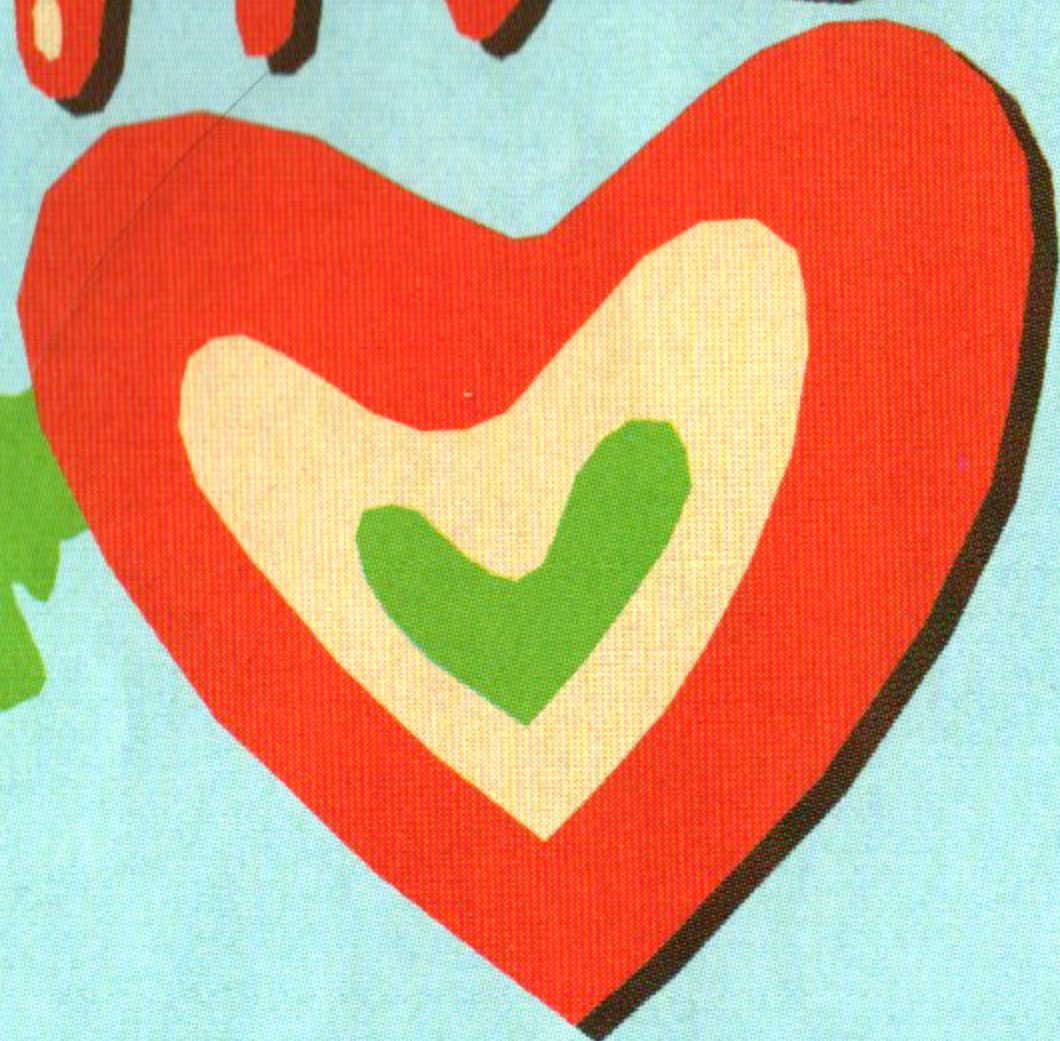


C is for Class Critter

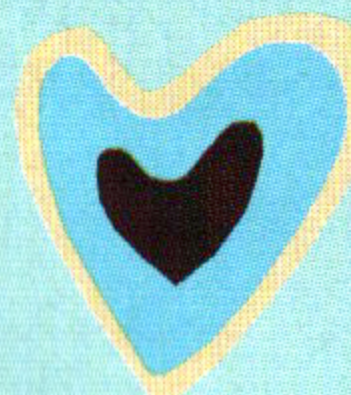
Adopt an animal at the zoo. Raise money to donate as a class, and then post a photo of the animal in your classroom. Ask if your class could take a field trip to visit. Make a cute bulletin board with facts about that animal.



FROM THE



When Ana saw the girls at the orphanage, she knew then that she had to do something more to help.



Here I am with my family in Colorado.

My horse is named Blizzard.



Like most American girls, I celebrate my birthday, but I also celebrate my citizenship day—August 23,

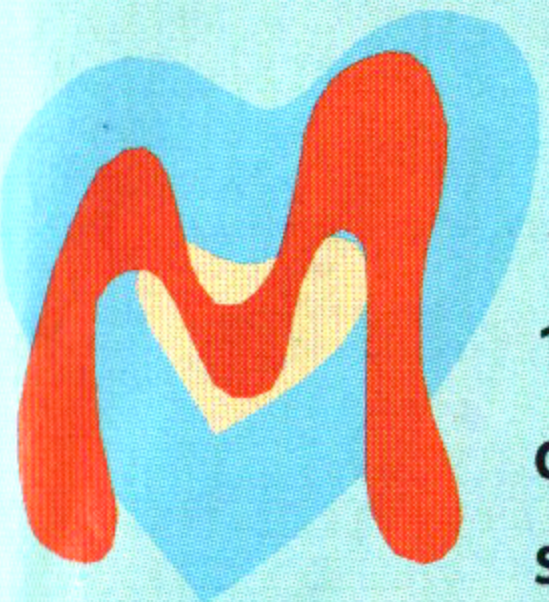
1993. That's the day that I officially became an American citizen.

I was adopted from Peru as a baby because my birth parents already had seven children and not enough money to buy food for one more. My birth mother wanted the best for me and decided to try to find a nice, loving family to raise me. Meanwhile, my adoptive parents

had two boys, ages 9 and 22. They wanted a girl and were investigating adoption. When they found out about me, my adoptive mom flew to Peru and started the adoption process, which took a whole year. She lived in my birth town while my dad and brothers flew back and forth. She made many friends and came to know my birth country well. Finally,

she was allowed to take me home.

My family and I live in the mountains in Colorado. I enjoy riding horses, rock climbing, and playing volleyball. I love my family and my home, but I've always wondered what Peru is like. I've felt a connection to Peru, so I have studied it whenever I've had the chance in school. I had really hoped to go there one day.



My family's gift to me on my 11th citizenship day was a dream come true. We were sitting on the couch in our family room after a big dinner when my mom handed me an envelope. My hands shook as I pulled out a schedule and plane tickets. "You and I are going back to Peru," my mom said.

I burst into tears, jumped up, and gave her a hug. We were going to visit my birthplace with other kids who, like me, had been adopted from that country. When my mom stayed in Peru, she learned that people there believed that those who were adopted would forget Peru and never come back, so it was a big deal that we were coming to visit. Besides just sightseeing, we were going to visit some orphanages. One of my mom's friends from Peru had set up our visits to the orphanages, including one in my birth town.

I kept thinking how lucky I was that I didn't end up in an orphanage, so I wanted to take something to the girls. I collected Spanish children's books and teddy bears. I wrote letters to friends of

our family and spoke at a local service club to get support for my idea. By the time we left, I had collected 200 books and 120 teddy bears.

In Peru, we visited ancient ruins and saw gorgeous scenery. I even got to ride a Peruvian horse. Even though we stayed in nice hotels and visited beautiful

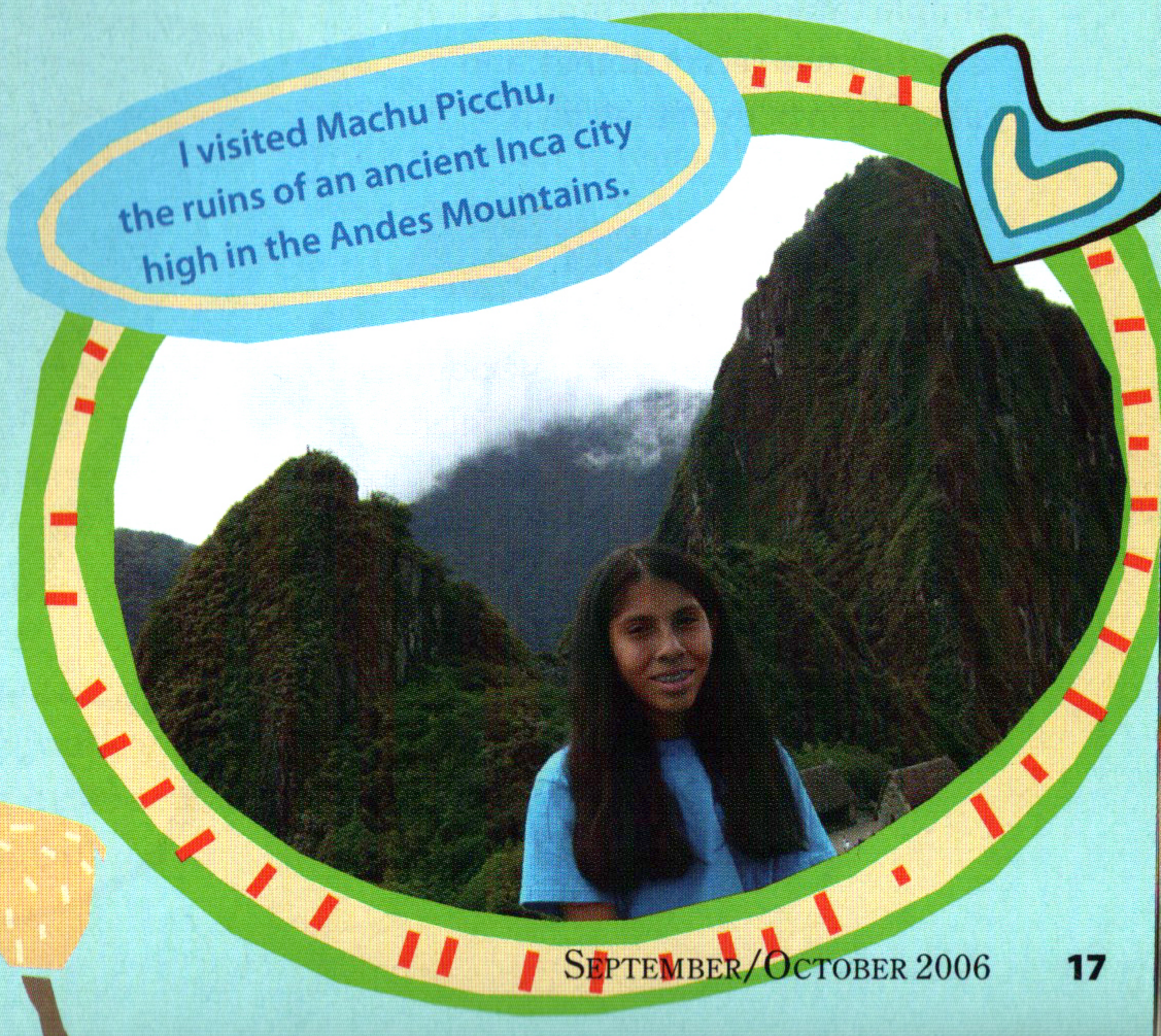
places, I really noticed the poverty. One time, riding down the highway, I looked out the bus window and saw a boy and girl about my age digging through trash piles on the side of the road. They looked dirty and hungry. It made me feel so sad.

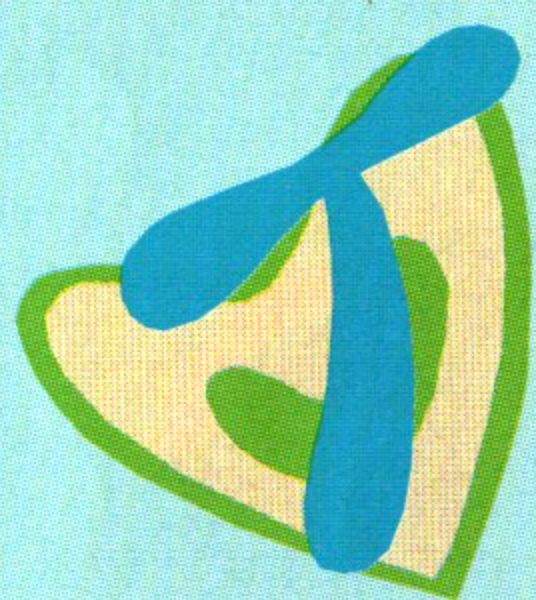
Finally, it was time to visit my birth town and the orphanage, which is home to 30 girls between the ages of one and sixteen. As the bus pulled up to the orphanage, I couldn't help but think, *This could have been me. If I hadn't been adopted, I might have ended up right here.*

If I hadn't been adopted, I might have ended up at an orphanage, too.

Before my trip, I collected bears to give to the girls.

I visited Machu Picchu, the ruins of an ancient Inca city high in the Andes Mountains.



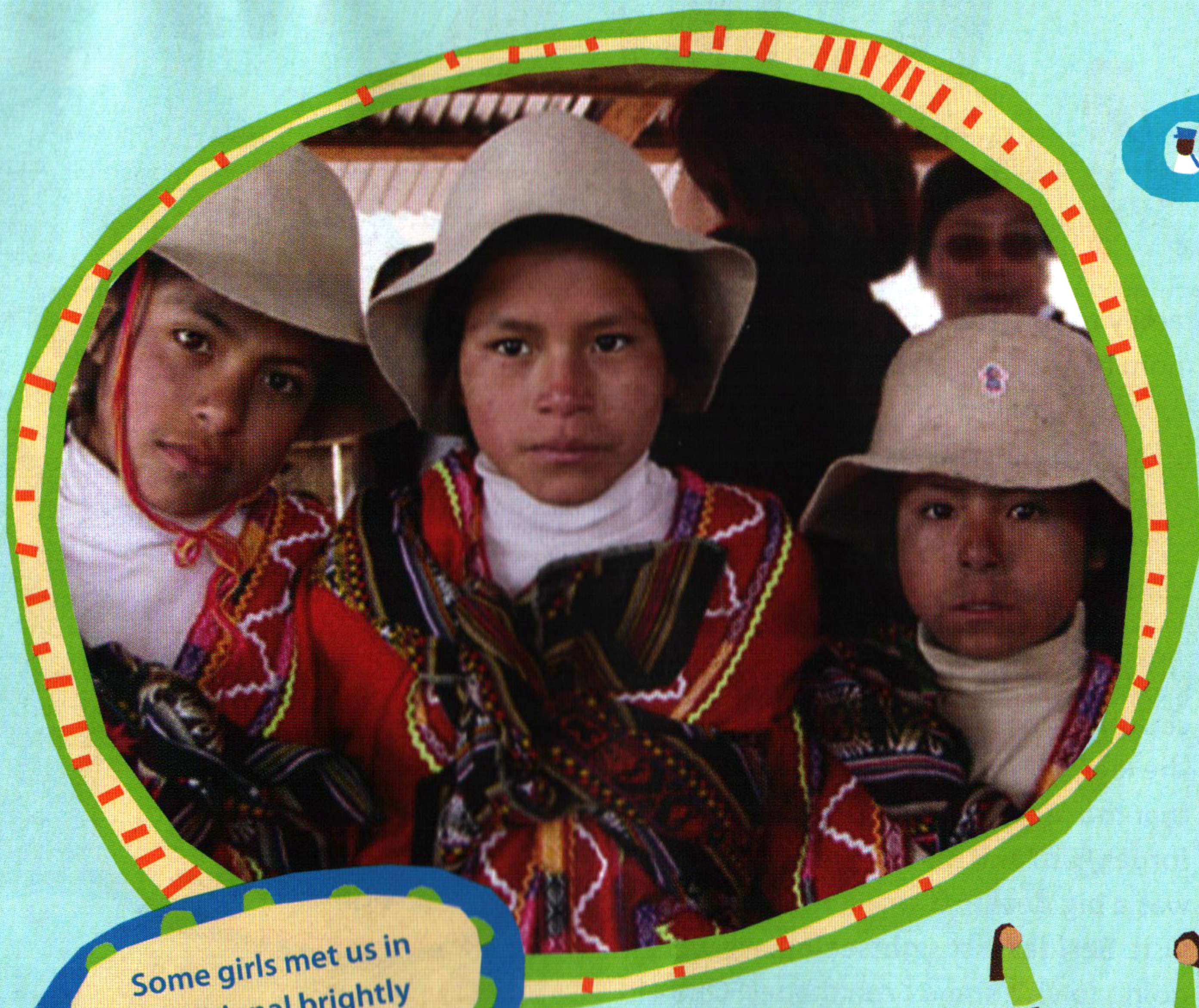


he girls came running out to us. They were singing and carrying balloons, which I later learned were among their only toys. They seemed really happy to see us. We learned later that no one had ever visited them before.

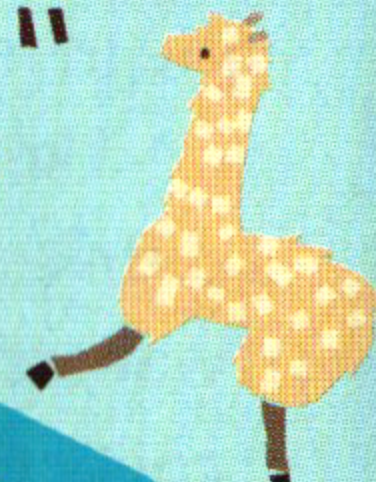
Three nuns run the orphanage and consider the girls their own. They told us, through our translator, that their goal was to provide a safe and loving place where the girls can grow physically, spiritually, and educationally.

A typical day for the girls starts with a very small breakfast. All of the girls' food is cooked in a big pot over an open fire. Then the girls go to school until the afternoon. They return to the orphanage for lunch, where more than 80 local children join them. For some of the other children, it is their only meal for the day. The girls spend the afternoons doing chores and studying. They eat a light dinner, spend time playing music and dancing, and go to sleep in bunk beds.

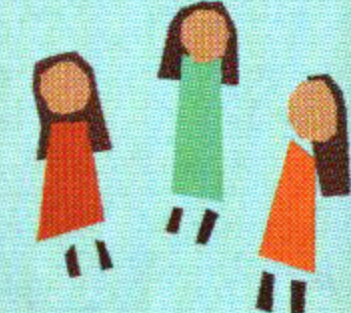
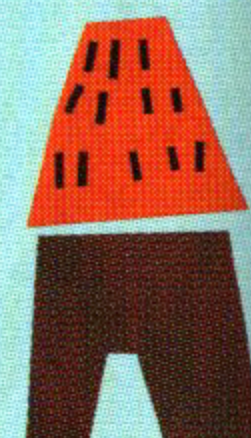
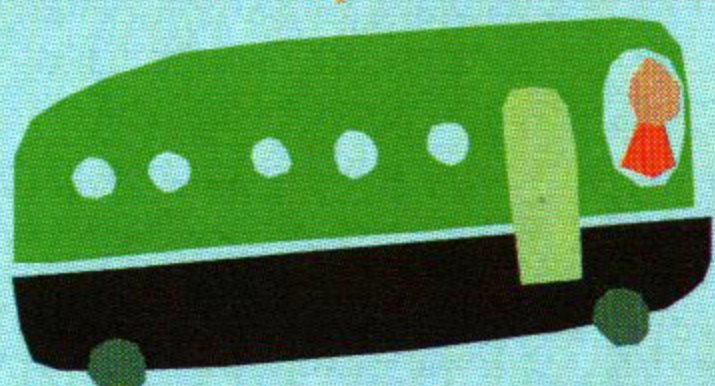
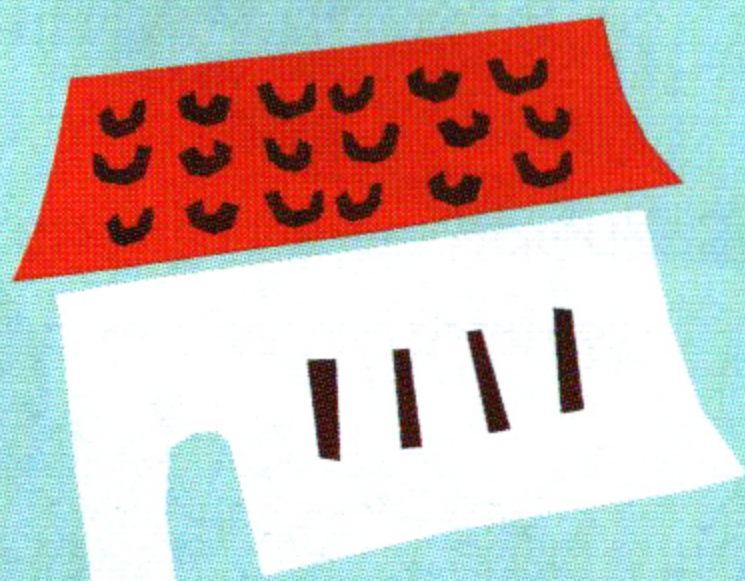
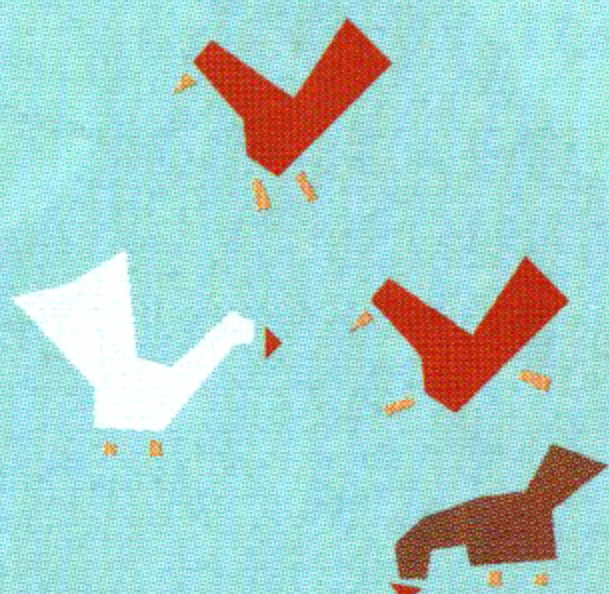
Their lives were so different from mine in the United States. They didn't have many toys. They worked hard making candles to sell to churches so that they could buy things they needed. Their main activity was listening to music on a tape player and practicing their traditional dances, which they performed for us. They were grateful for simple things such as food to eat, their two sets of clothes, and sleeping in beds of their own.



Some girls met us in traditional brightly colored clothes.

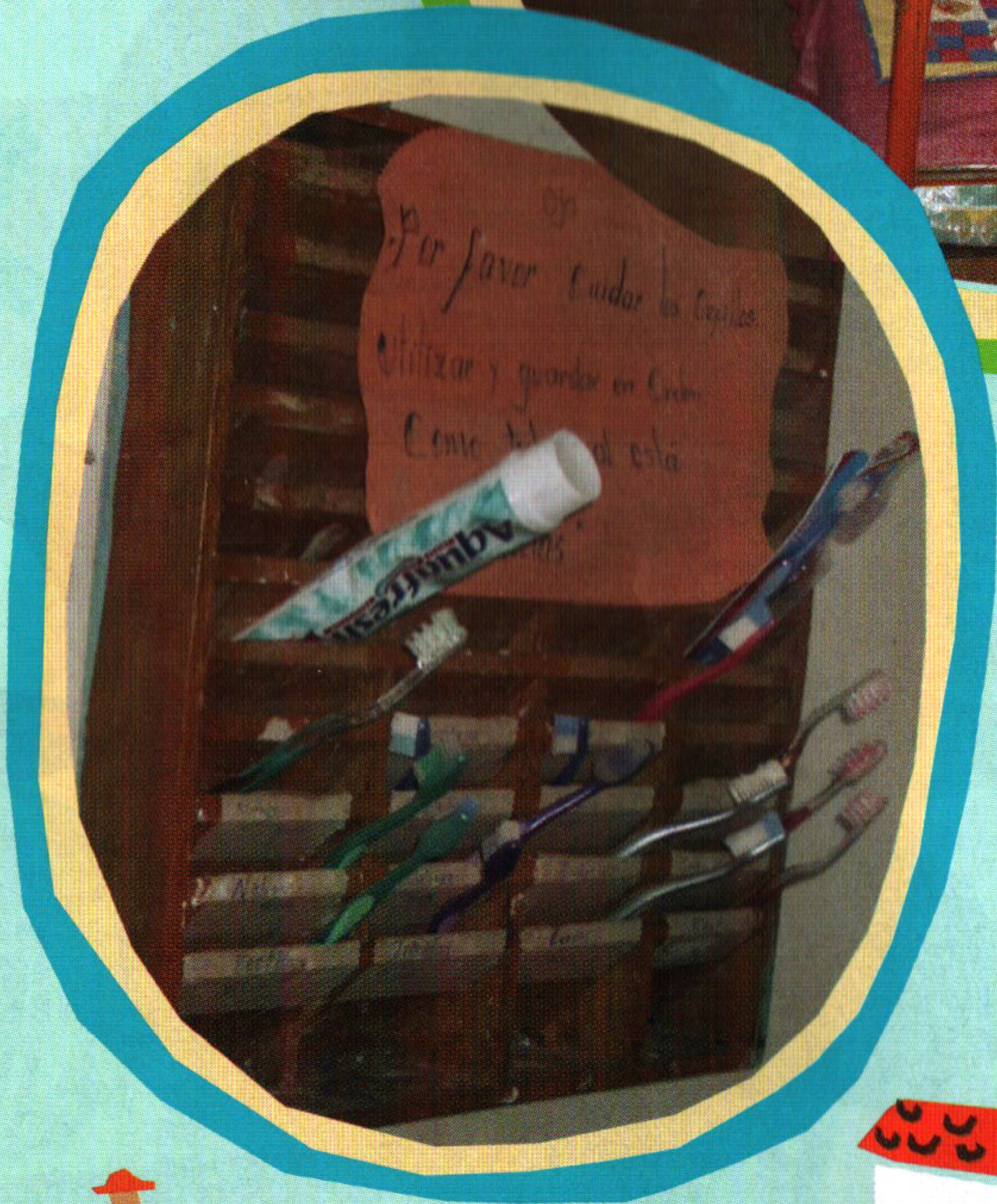
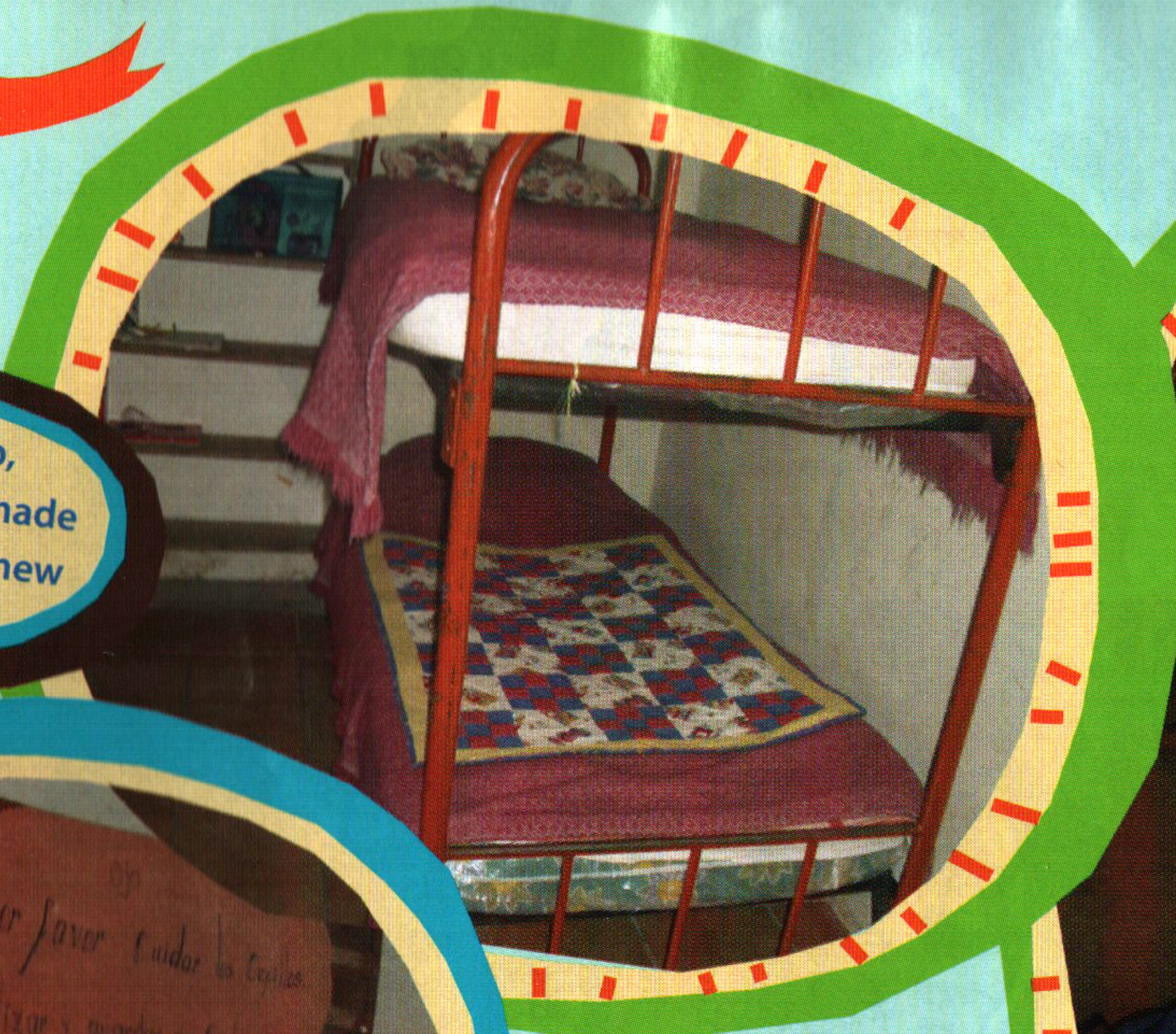


Here I am (on the left) with my new friend, Gloria.

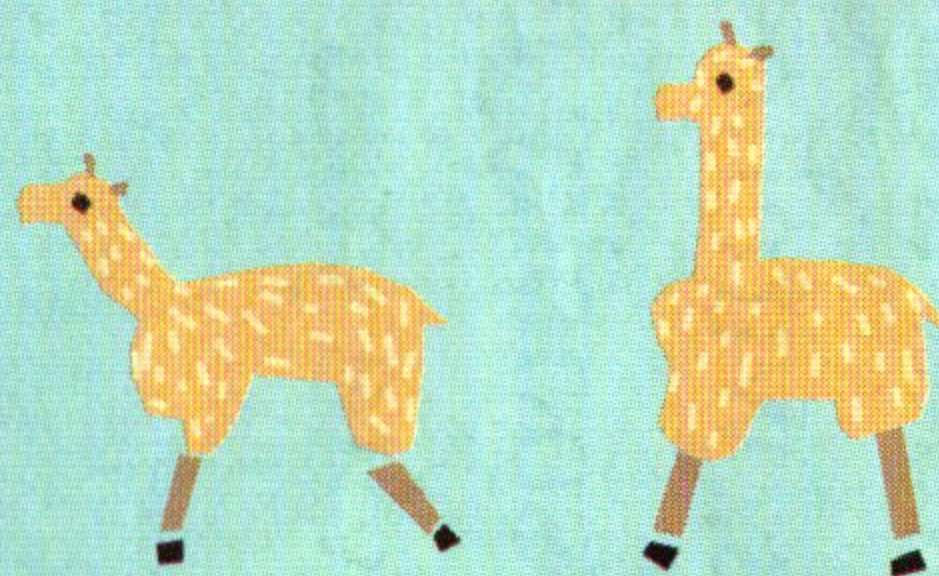


DELIVERY FROM ANA

With my group's help, the girls now have handmade quilts for their beds and new toothbrushes.



After my trip, I collected vitamins, toothpaste, and other items the girls needed.

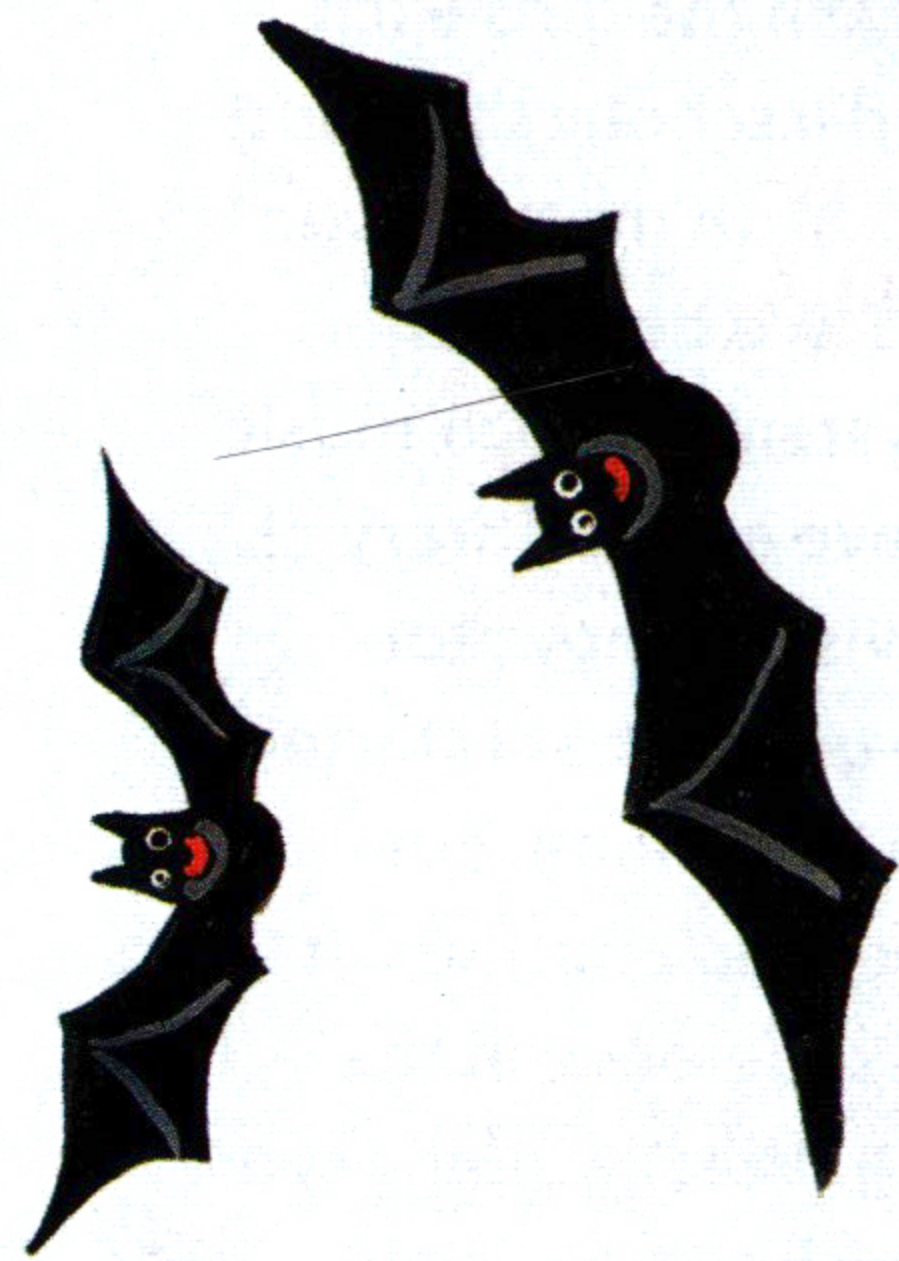


At the orphanage, I met a girl I'll never forget. Her name was Gloria, and she was nearly my own age. Looking into her dark eyes, I thought again, *This could have been me.* She held my hand and proudly gave me a tour. She spoke broken English, and our translator helped us talk to each other. As we were leaving, Gloria handed me a heart-shaped candle that she had made. I wanted to give her something in exchange for it, but she refused. She said she believed that I wouldn't forget the girls at the orphanage and that I would do something to help make their lives better. *That's exactly what I want to do!* I thought.

When we got home to Colorado, I told my mom that I couldn't get the girls out of my mind and that I wanted to help them. She suggested that we send them a check, but I wanted to do more. We decided to write to the nuns, asking what the girls needed. The nuns wrote that they needed vitamins and food. With my parents' help, I started a nonprofit group to collect money to buy vitamins, food, and other needed items for the orphanage. I wrote letters to the others on our trip, spoke to community groups, and started a newsletter that tells of the orphanage's needs. So far, my group has raised more than \$20,000 for the orphanage. We've sent the girls school supplies, backpacks,

vitamins (enough for all the children who come for lunch each day), funds to build a chicken coop and buy chickens so that they can have fresh eggs, and other items to make their lives better. We hired a tutor to teach the girls each afternoon and started a scholarship fund that I named after my birth mother, who never learned to read. We bought the girls a good stereo system for their music and dancing. They have a little library of books, and they get visitors now, too. I'm proud of the group that I started. I know that I can't do it all alone, but I believe that with the help of others, it is possible to make a difference in the world. I think that together we really can change the world, one heart at a time.



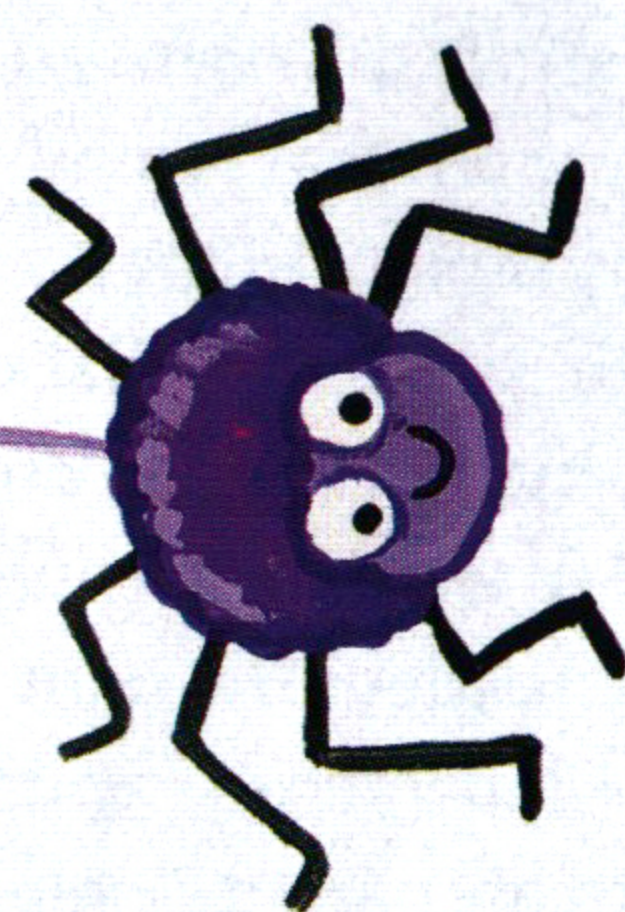


Tricks and treats and ghosts galore,
Spiders, witches, and so much more!
For some spooky fun, come right this way.
Invite your friends to the...



Invitation

Use a white paint pen to write party details on a folded black piece of paper. On the front, write "Your table awaits you at the Ghoul Café!" and write the party details inside. Doodle ghosts or add ghost stickers to the front.



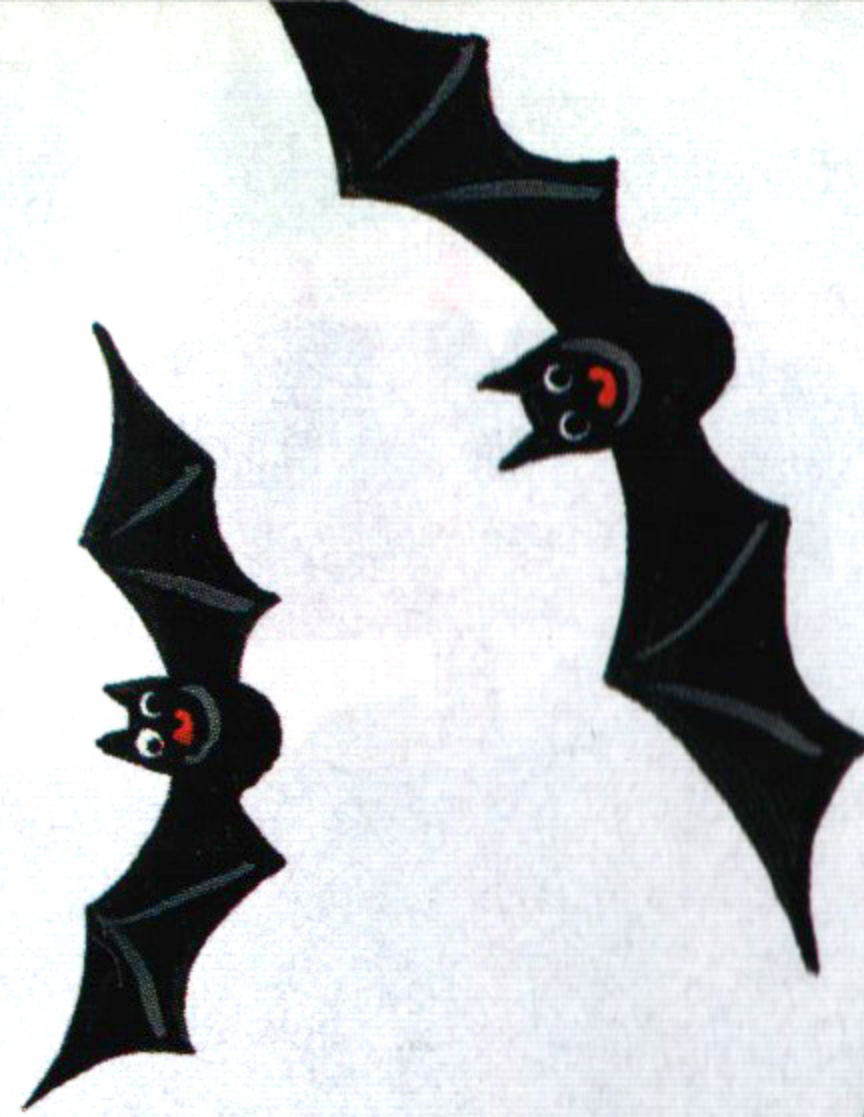
Ghoul Café!

Terrifying Table

Set the scene for the Ghoul Café. Place a tablecloth on the dining table. Use fake cobwebs for place mats. Wrap plastic spider rings around napkins. Set a carved pumpkin in the middle of the table as a centerpiece.

Hostess of Horrors

Ask an adult to dress up in costume and be the Ghoul Café hostess. When guests arrive, the hostess will escort each girl to the table where the party will begin.



Menacing Menu

Set out a menu at each person's seat at the table. Include all of the menu items of the day.

Finger Food

It's O.K. to bite these nails! You will need baby carrots, cream cheese, sliced almonds, and salsa. Spread a dab of cream cheese on the end of each carrot. Gently press an almond slice into cream cheese. Arrange "fingers" around a bowl of salsa and dig in!

Café Cups

Put Halloween stickers on orange paper cups for an extra-ghoulish touch.

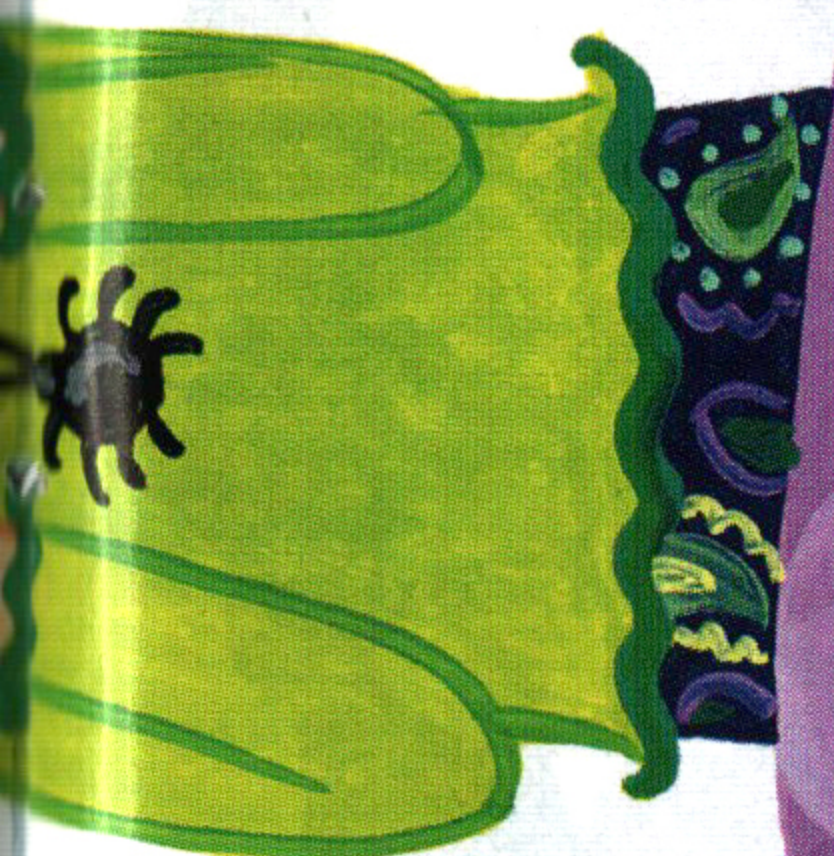
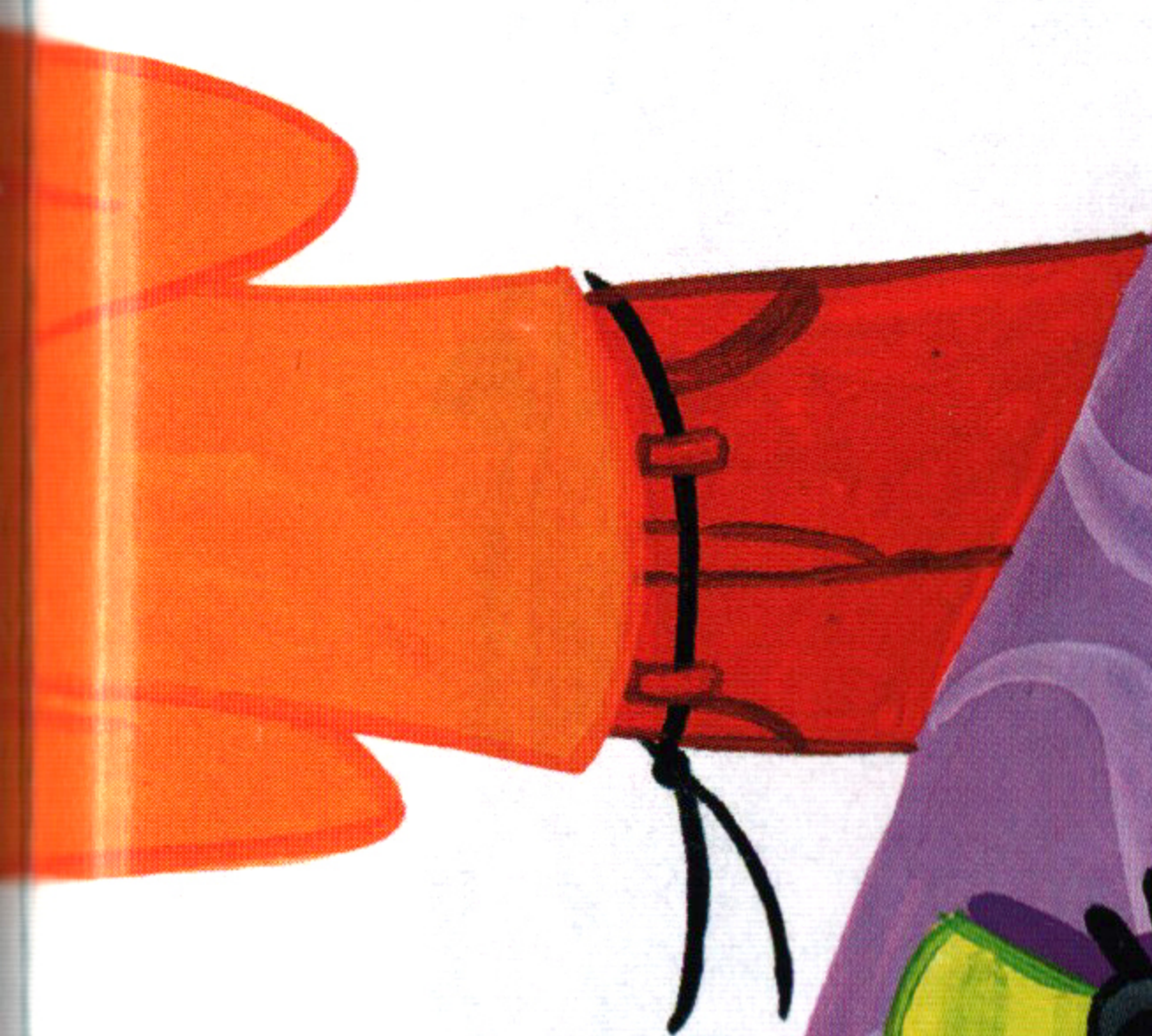
Monster Mash

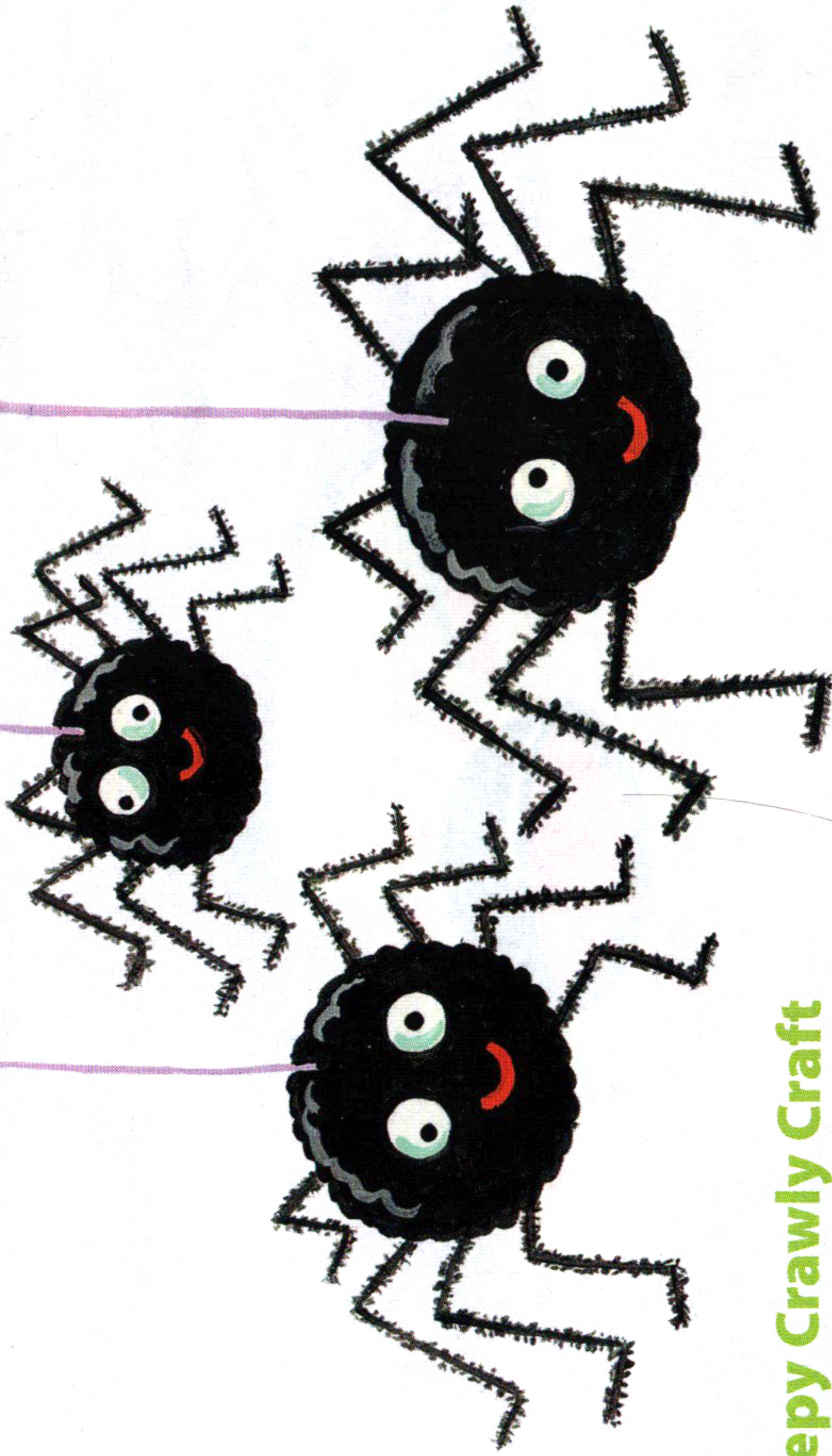
Set up a mashed potato bar. Fill small bowls with toppings for the potatoes, such as shredded cheese, sliced olives, and tomatoes. Have guests fill small bowls with mashed potatoes and add their own toppings.

Brew Ha-Ha


Serve this tangy witch's brew to all your ghoulfriends. In a pitcher, combine 1 can pineapple-orange juice concentrate (pourable or frozen) and 3 cans lemon-lime soda. Stir gently and serve.

Monster Mash





Creepy Crawly Craft

 This little spider is creepy—and cute! Give each girl a large black pom-pom, 2 googly eyes, and 8 2-inch pieces of black pipe cleaner (ask an adult to help you cut pieces of pipe cleaner because of sharp ends). Add

large dabs of glue to the pom-pom to attach each spider leg. Use glue to attach googly eyes. Let dry. Bend legs. Tie a piece of monofilament (fishing line) around the spider so that it can hang from a light fixture or doorknob.

Spooky Spoons

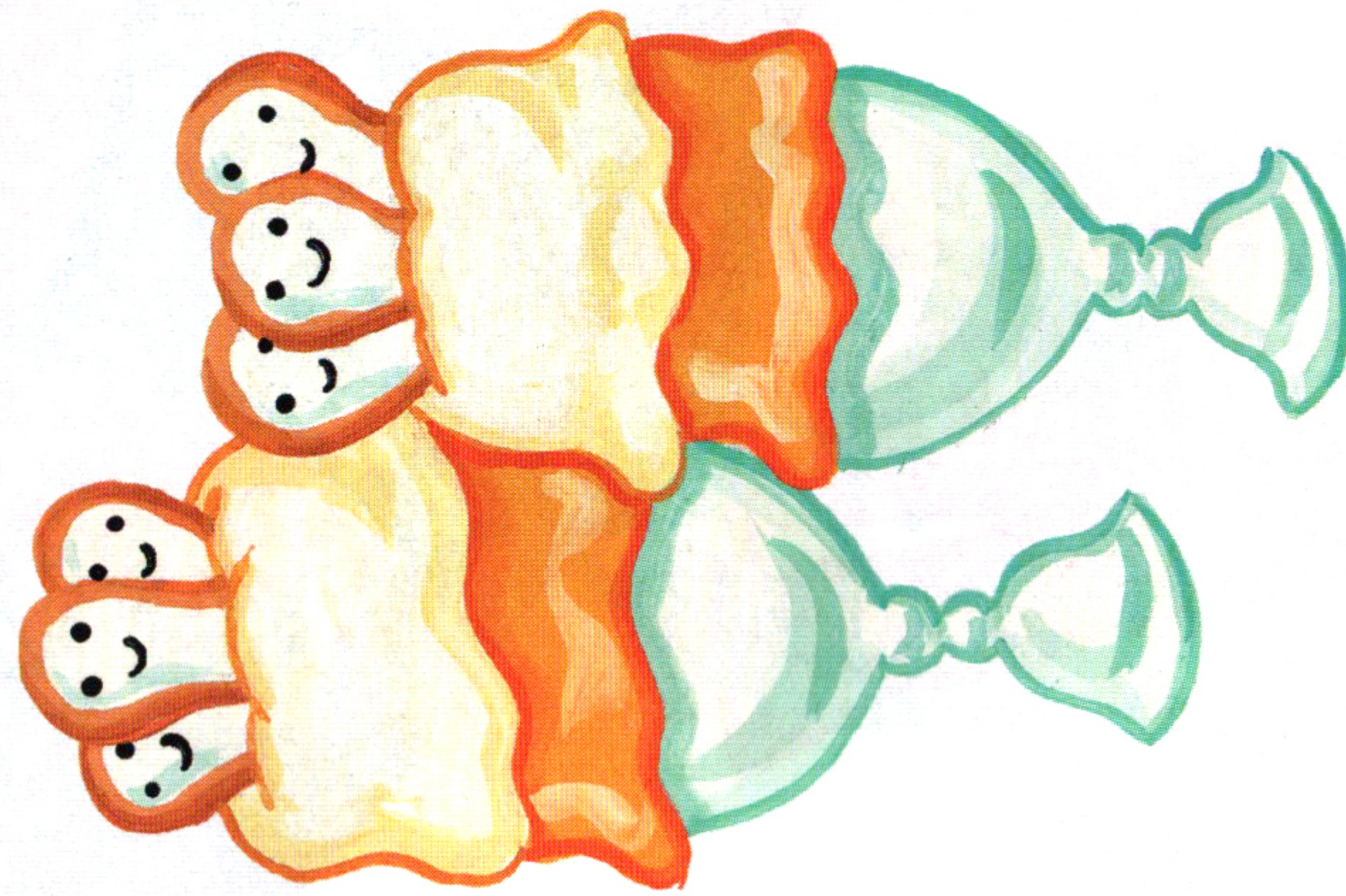
Play this fast action game. Sit in a circle and give everyone 7 playing cards. Set plastic spoons with ghosts drawn on them in the middle of the circle. There should be one fewer spoon than the number of players. The first player begins by drawing from the deck of remaining cards. The object is to get 4 of a kind. If she doesn't want the card, she passes it on.

If she wants the card, she takes it and gives one of hers away. Play continues until one person gets 4 of a kind. She sneakily grabs a spoon. When other players realize a spoon is missing, they quickly grab the remaining spoons. The player who ends up without a spoon gets an "S." The first player to get all the letters in "SPOOKY" is the loser.



I Scream Parfaits

Guests will howl for these sweet treats. Serve orange sherbet and vanilla ice cream sundaes topped with ghoulish ghosts. To make ghosts, you will need peanut-shaped sandwich cookies, white frosting, and black gel icing. To make a ghost, frost one side of a cookie. Add eyes and mouth with gel icing.



Scary-o-kee

For some after-dinner entertainment, sing popular songs using monster voices.



Ghosts Galore

Divide into two teams and line up. Give each team a tray and a pile of white balloons with black ghost faces drawn on them. Set a timer for two minutes. On "go," the first person in each line loads the tray with as many balloons as she can and tries to carry them across the room to her team's goal (a chair works fine). She must hold the tray with two hands at all times. If balloons fall, she must leave them there. She dumps her balloons and goes back to give the tray to the next person on her team who does the same. When time is up, the team with the most "ghosts" in their goal wins!



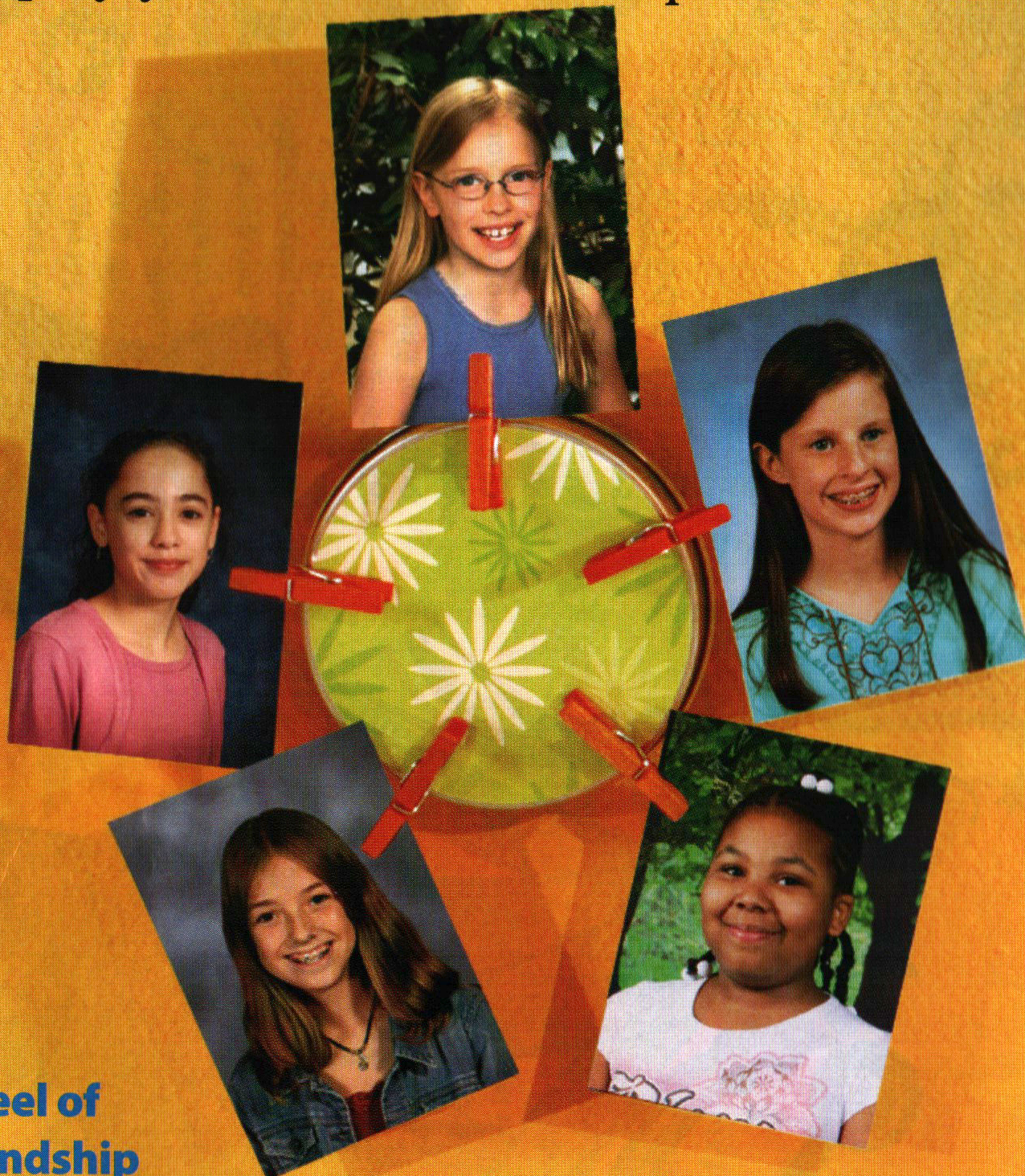
Daring Doggie Bag

Send each guest home with a bag full of "leftover" treats. Fill a colored paper bag with candy versions of your favorite café foods. Look for wax soda bottles or gummy pasta. Hauntingly delicious! ★



Friend Photos

Display your friends' school photos in clever ways.



Wheel of Friendship

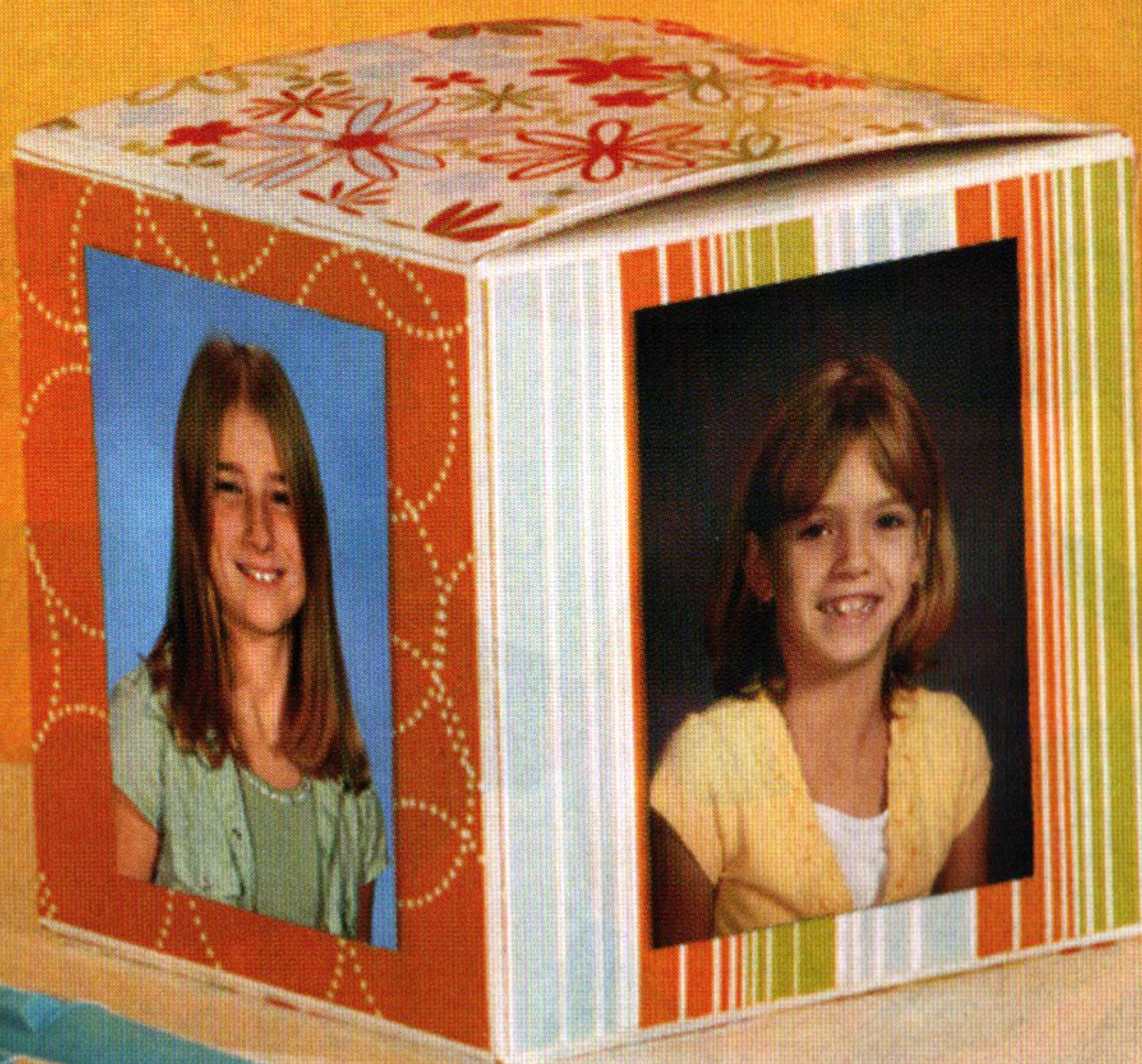
Clean out the lid of a circular candy tin. Cut paper to cover lid and attach with glue. Let dry. Glue mini clothespins (available at craft stores) onto lid in a circular pattern. Let dry. Clip in photos and hang on a pushpin on your bulletin board.

Garland Gals

Hang your friends' faces up for everyone to see. Follow the directions on AG's Friend Frame Garland to create your own garland.

Cute Cube

Cut pieces of patterned paper to fit on the sides of a small gift box. (Gift boxes are available at discount and party stores.) Attach the paper to the box with a glue stick. Add friend photos using a glue stick.



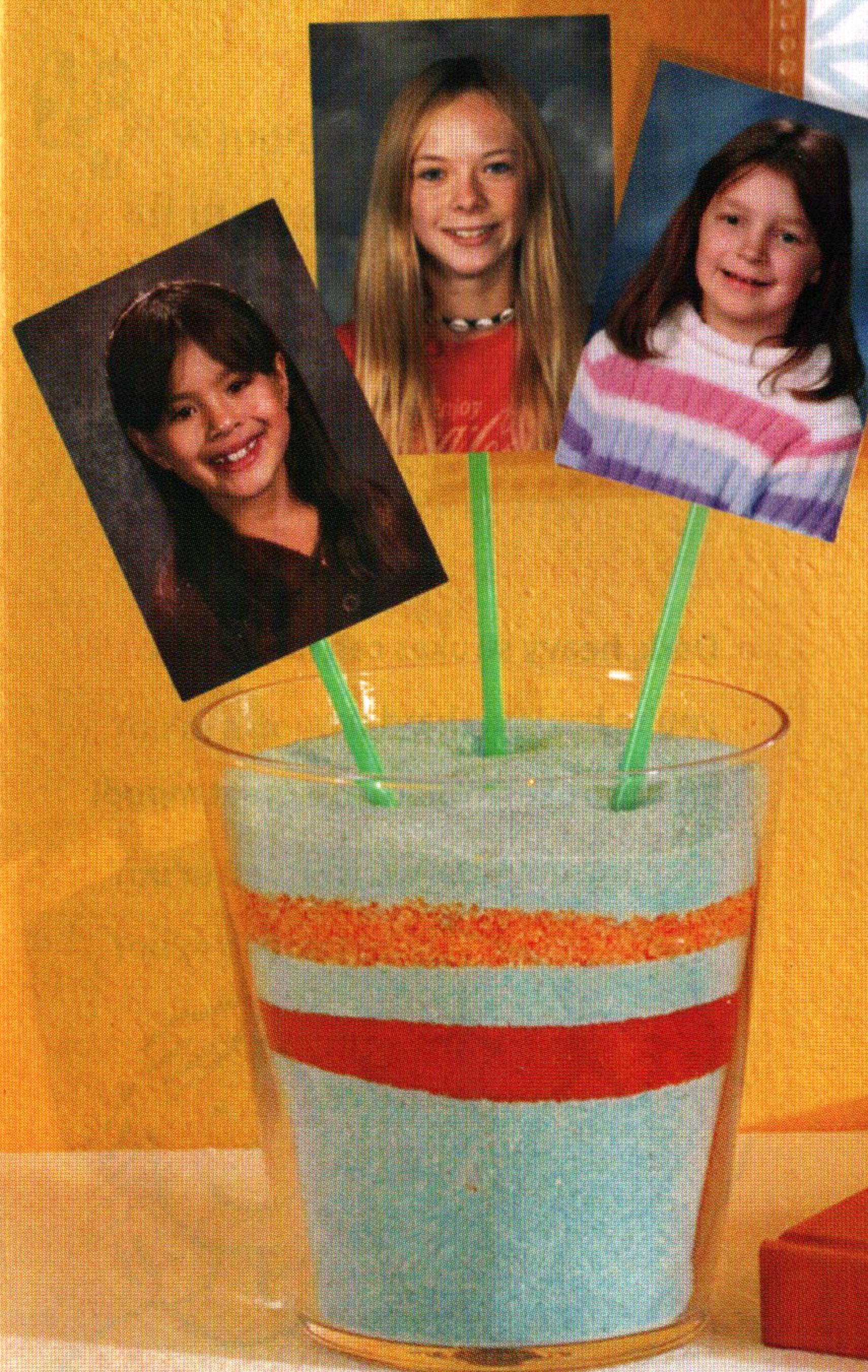
Pocket Pics

Cut pieces of patterned paper to fit into pockets of a plastic sleeve meant for holding baseball cards. Use double-sided tape to attach school photos to the pieces of paper. Slide into pockets. Punch holes on both sides of the sleeve and tie a ribbon to hang.



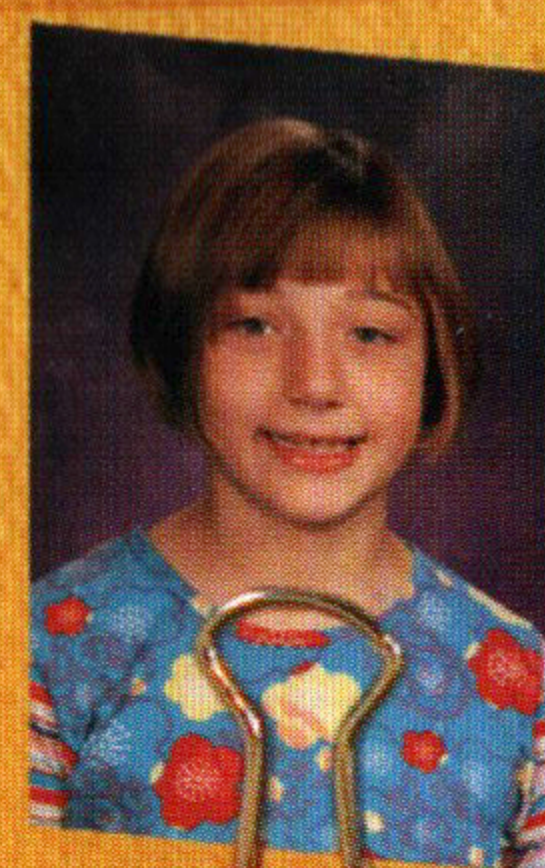
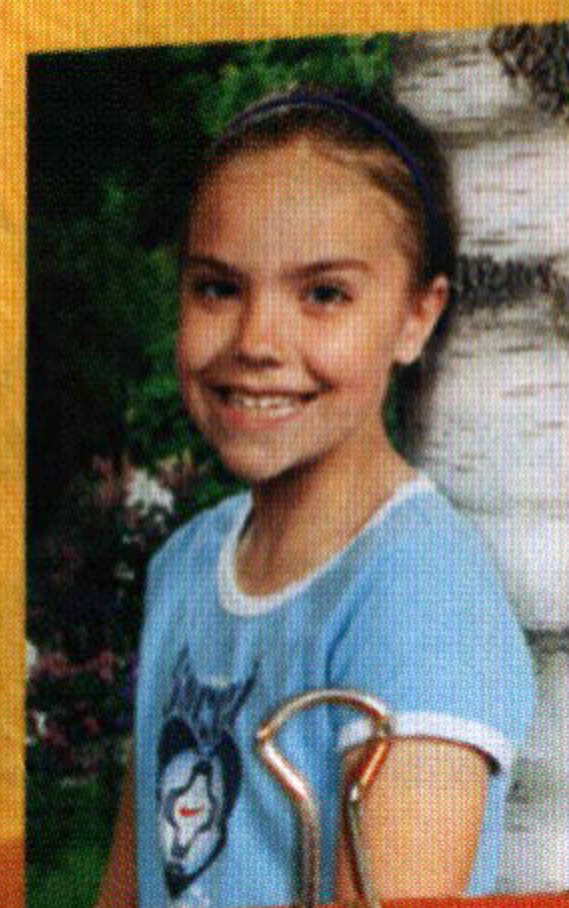
Photo Garden

Use a piece of tape to secure a photo to a small drinking straw. Place straws in a plastic cup filled with colored sand.



Binder Clip Buds

Attach rhinestones and confetti to binder clips using craft glue. Let dry. Set clips upright and clip pictures inside. Set them anywhere you need a smile. ★





Stretch



a Sketch

Take a look at your doodles — they might say oodles about you.



Do you always sprinkle your school-work with stars? Do you always fill in the blank spaces in capital B's? Some scientists who study the mind think that your answers to these questions reveal parts of your personality.

Take this fun quiz and see if you agree with the experts. Grab a sheet of paper and spend some time drawing random doodles and scribbles. Use the sheet as your doodle sample, and answer these questions.



1

When you doodled, did you:

- a. start at the left and work to the right?
- b. start at the right and work to the left?



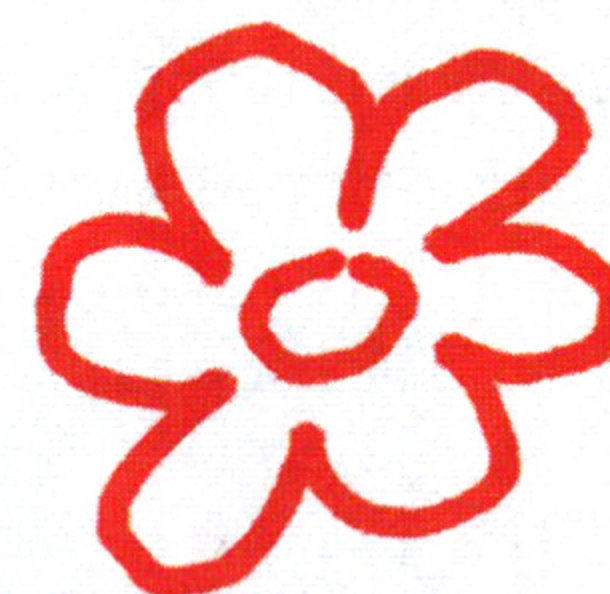
What it means:

- a. You're more of a dreamer—creative and sensitive.
- b. You're more of a thinker—logical and practical.

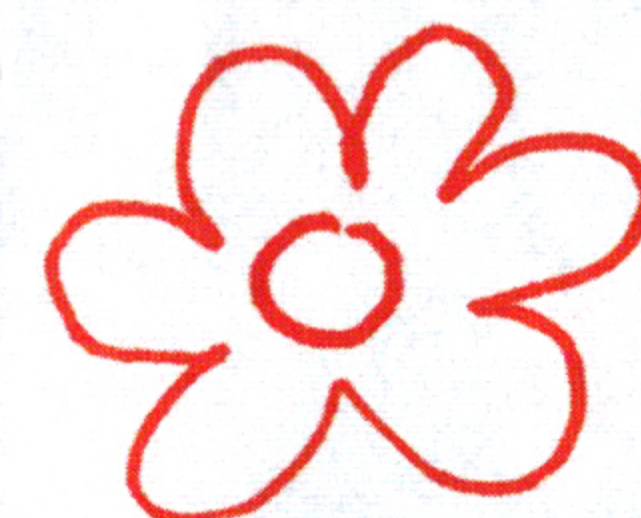
2

Does your doodle look more like:

a.

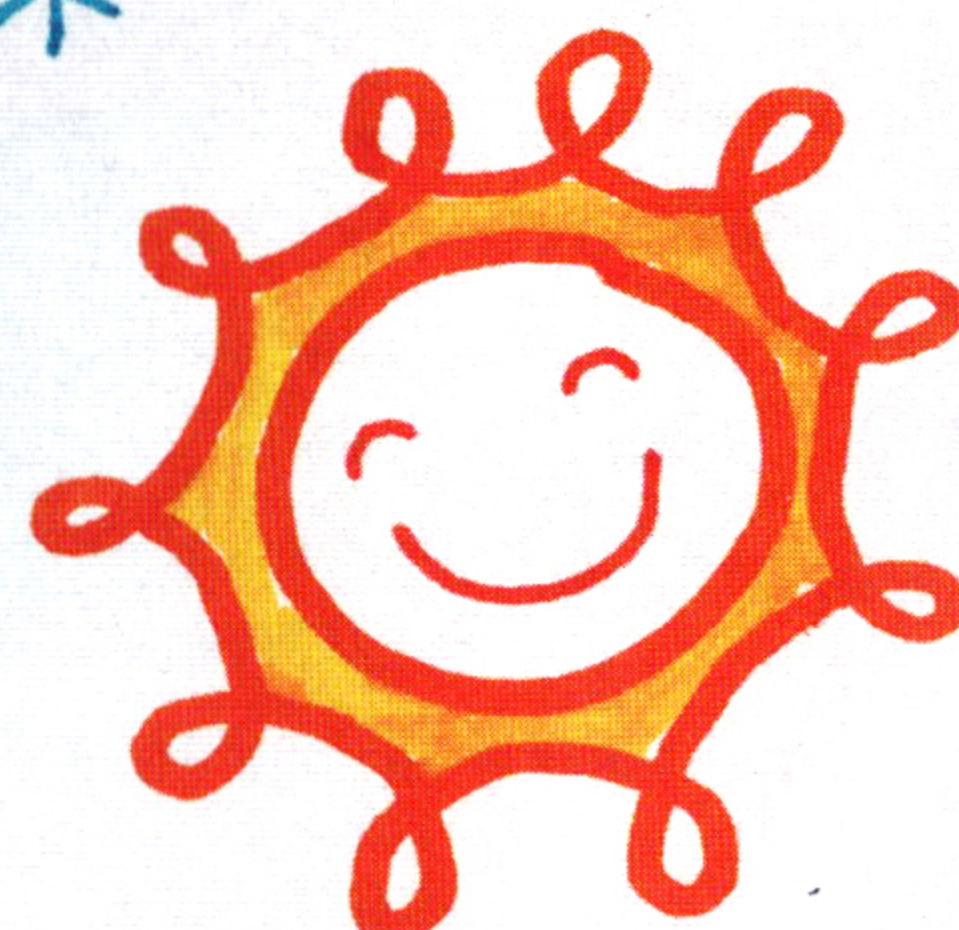
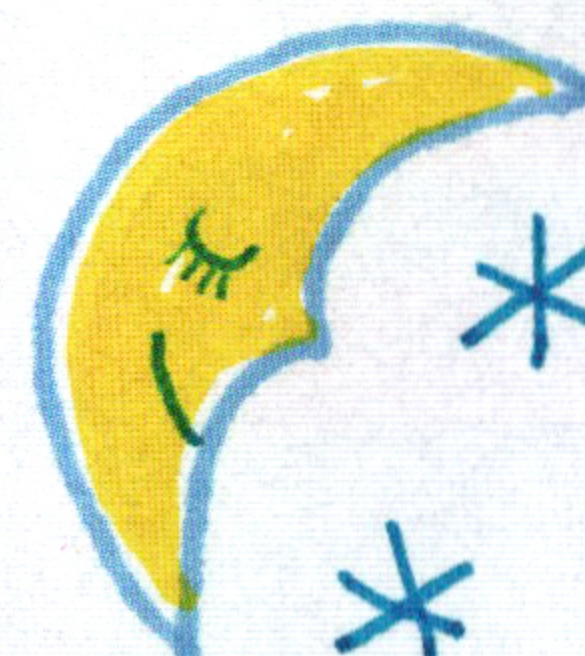


b.



What it means:

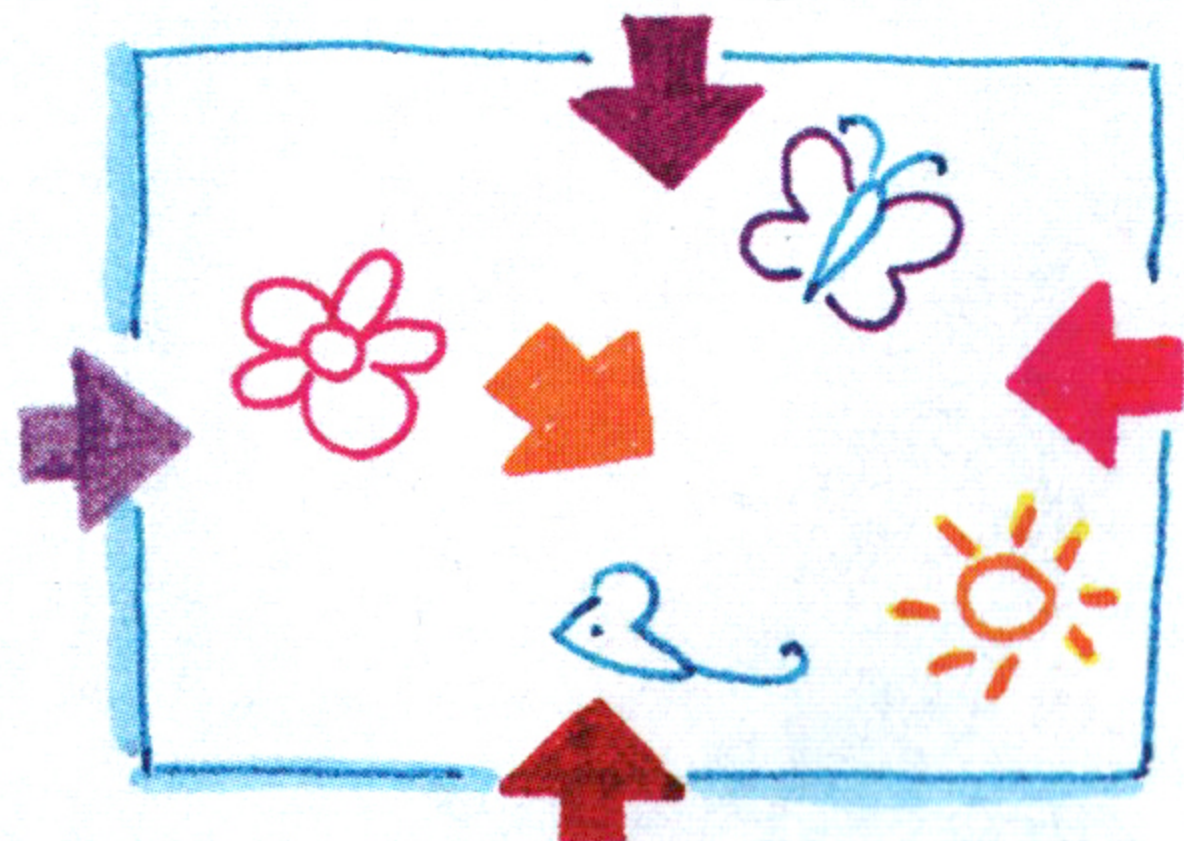
- a. Dark, heavy strokes can mean that you're having a hard day.
- b. Light strokes? You're in a great mood!



3

Where's your doodle?

- a. left side of the page
- b. right side of the page
- c. top of the page
- ☒ d. center of the page
- e. bottom of the page



What it means:

- ☒ a. You're quiet and reserved.
- b. You're sociable and optimistic.
- c. You're enthusiastic!
- d. You like to be the center of attention.
- e. You're reluctant to push yourself.

5

Did you draw:

- a. a butterfly?
- b. a dragonfly?

What it means:

- ☒ a. You're a wanderer—you don't want to miss out on anything, but you can be a little scatterbrained.
- b. You're an organizer—you rarely lose things, and it's easy for you to stay on task at school.



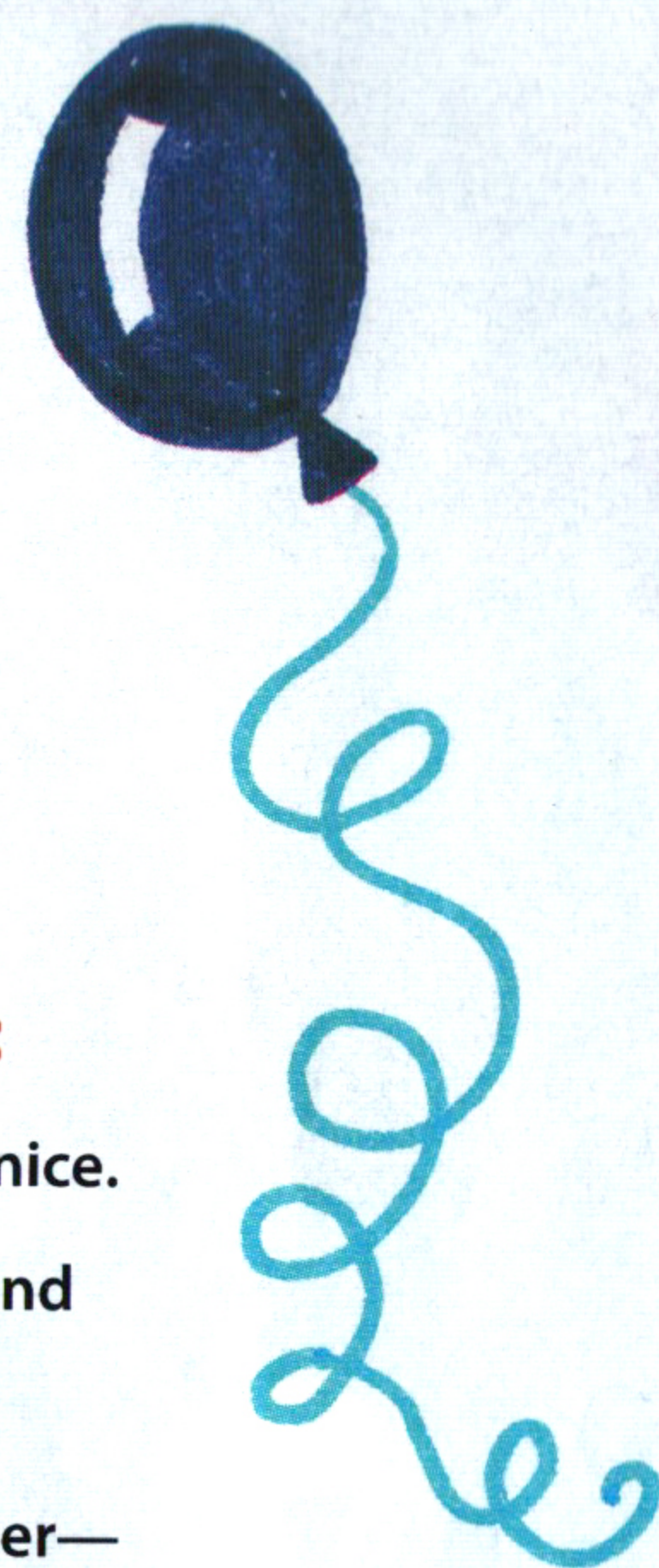
7

Which of these doodles did you draw?

- ☒ a. a flower
- b. a star
- c. the ocean
- d. an umbrella
- e. an arrow
- f. a balloon
- g. a rainbow

What it means:

- ☒ a. You're gentle and nice.
- b. You're optimistic and energetic.
- c. You're a daydreamer—very imaginative.
- d. You're protective of your friends.
- e. You're ambitious and always ready for action.
- f. You're full of hope.
- g. You're cheerful and happy.



4

Which scribble did you do?




- a. fill in or embellish letters
- ☒ b. draw intricate patterns
- c. write your name over and over again
- d. draw a wandering line

What it means:

- a. You're a good team player.
- ☒ b. You're a shy girl.
- c. You're figuring out who you are.
- d. You're distracted.

6

Which shapes show up in your doodles?

- a. 
- ☒ b. 
- c. 

What it means:

- a. You're brainy.
- ☒ b. You're decisive.
- c. You're levelheaded.

Some experts say that doodling relaxes your brain and can help you be more creative. Always make sure that you're paying attention in class, but if you're having trouble with a project, don't be afraid to doodle away. You never know what you might discover! ★



Boost Your Spirit!

Feeling stressed? These ideas will help you relax.

by Elizabeth Chobanian

Wash up.

Take a bath or shower to soothe away the day's worries. Use a lavender-scented body wash for an extra-calming effect.



Share your love.

The power of touch can make your day! So the next time you're stressed, ask someone you love for a hug.

Skip caffeine.

Caffeine affects your body the same way that stress does. So if your goal is relaxation, steer clear of caffeine. It's found in coffee, teas, sodas, chocolate, and even in some bottled waters.



Photo: Fotosearch



Get quiet.

Look for a peaceful place in the house with no distractions and not much noise—just a cozy space for you, a soft blanket, and your thoughts.

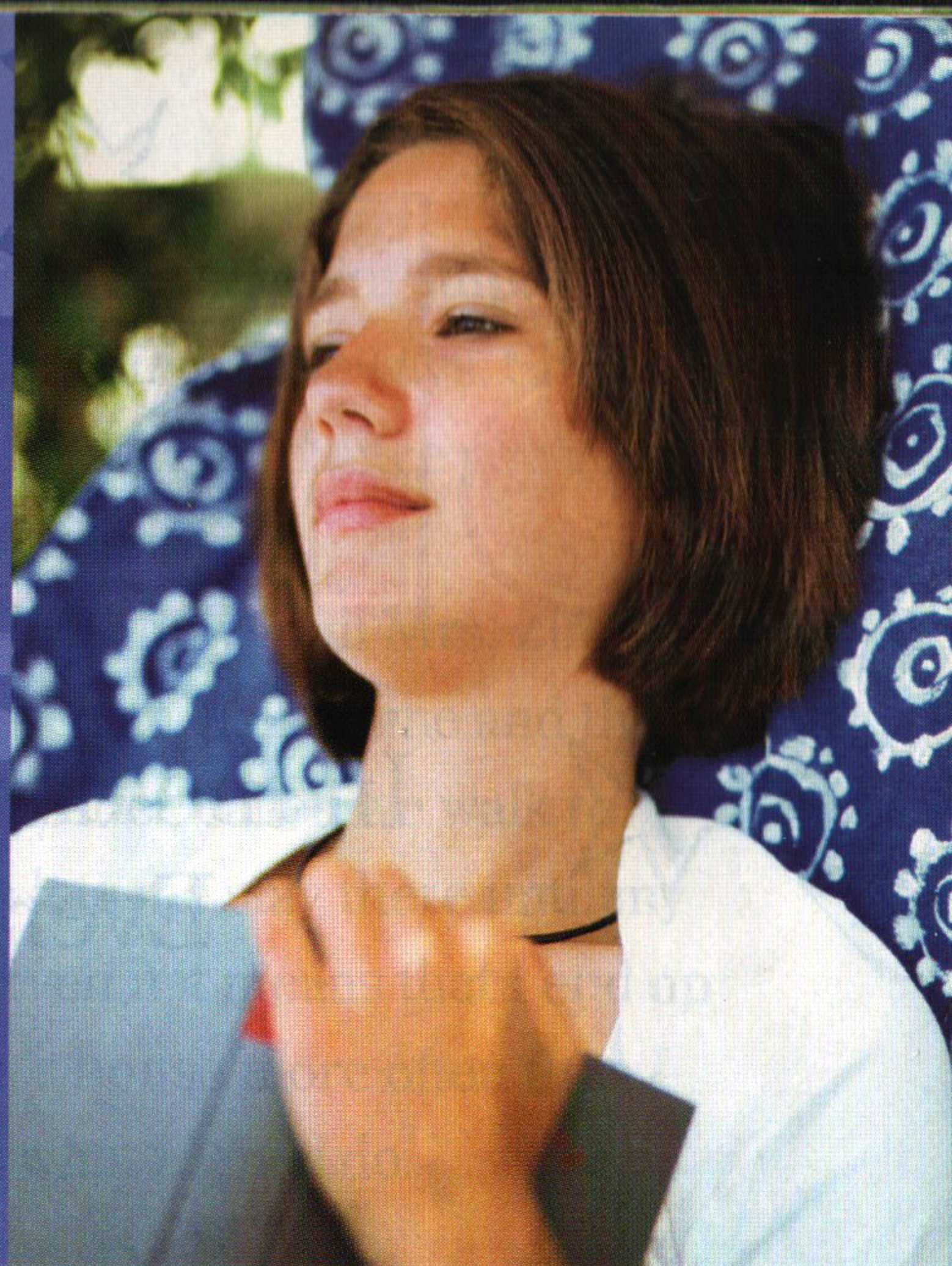


Photo: Corbis



Photo: Corbis

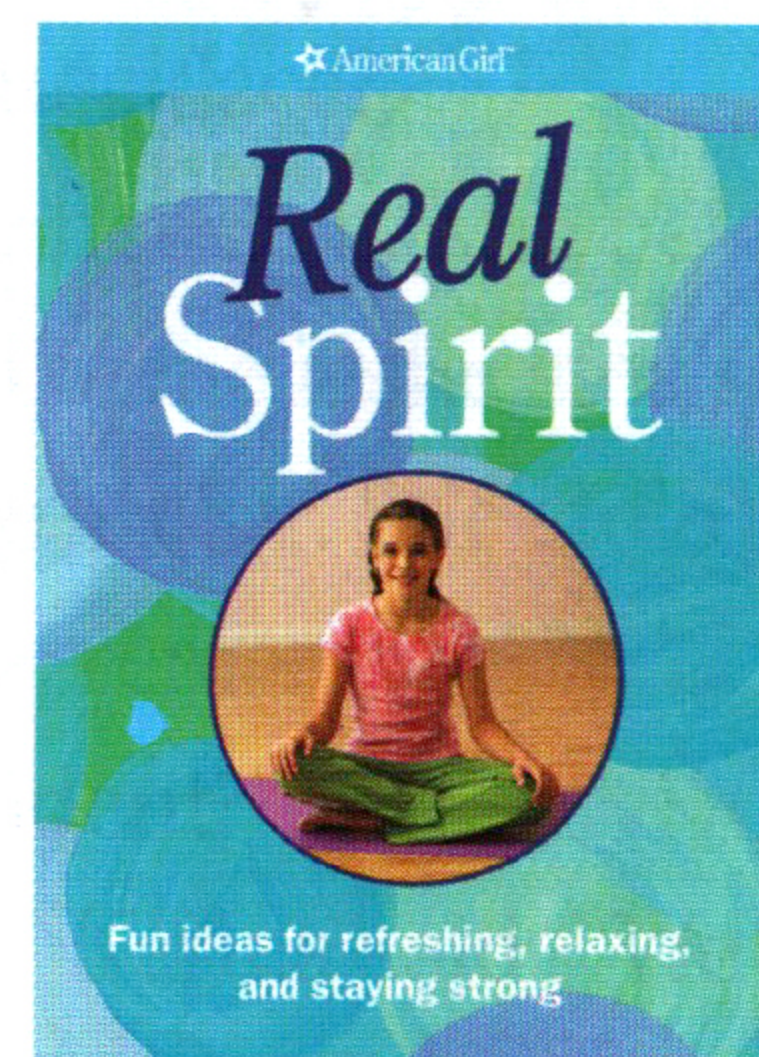
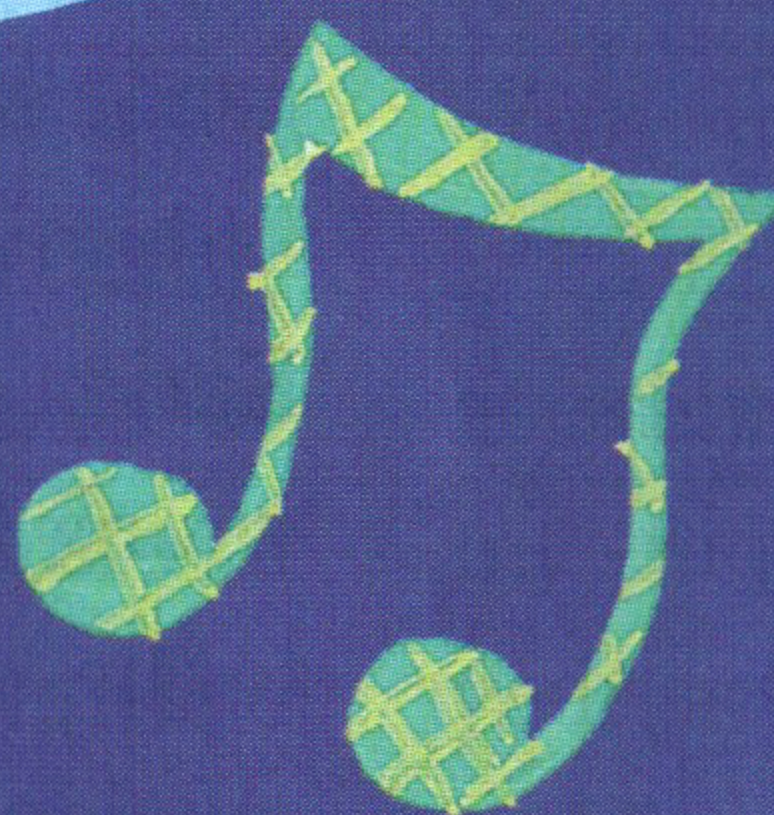
Frame photos.

Display pictures of your friends and family. Even when you want to be by yourself, seeing their faces will be a feel-good reminder of their love.



Wake gently.

Reset your clock radio alarm so that you wake to music instead of beeping. ★



These ideas and more are in the book *Real Spirit*, in bookstores now.

Sheba Lee

In the dance studio, Sheba Lee is outstanding.
Everywhere else, she just stands out.

by Teresa Cotsirilos



On the first day of fifth grade, Karina came to school wearing cowboy boots the color of fire engines. “Ooh, I like your shoes!” said Sheba Lee as we walked into class for the first time.

“I like your shoes!” she said again as we waited in line in the cafeteria.

“I really like your shoes!” she said as we tried to avoid her walking home. And the next day at school she wore cowboy boots, with her hair back like Karina’s in a long French braid.

Sheba Lee had been the most annoying kid at school since the second grade. Every year she chose a different group of girls to latch on to. In third grade she chose the Popular Girls, in fourth grade she chose the girls in Science Club, and in fifth grade she chose us. She tried to dress like Karina. When she talked, she always said the wrong thing. She even followed Karina and me to the bathroom, and waited silently for us right outside the stall doors. “If she follows me to the bathroom one more time I just might dunk her head in the toilet!” Karina said. “She’s like having a second shadow. Why can’t she just, like, move to Greenland or something?”

But I was surprised when Karina said that Sheba Lee had stolen from her. It happened sometime in October. After Ms. Gershwin's ballet class, in the stuffy, smelly chaos of the dressing room as we changed out of our leotards and into our jeans and scuffed shoes, Karina saw Sheba Lee sneak something into her bag. When Karina got home, she searched her gym bag for the necklace I had given her—one of those friendship necklaces with half a heart hanging from it, and I had the necklace with the other half. It was gone.

math is hard for me doesn't mean I'm stupid—it just means I think about things sideways. She also says that fractions aren't that hard once you've got the hang of it. I do not believe her.

Karina always waits faithfully until Mrs. Zltowsky and I are done so that we can walk home and then to ballet together. Then, after ballet, we walk to Karina's house. Karina lets me stay there until my mom can pick me up, even if it means that I end up eating dinner at Karina's house more often than I eat dinner at mine. It's what friends do.



"Why would Sheba Lee want it, though?" I asked Karina. We were walking home from school after my math tutoring with Mrs. Zltowsky. I saw Mrs. Zltowsky three days a week after school now, and it was making me late to ballet. We were doing fractions. I hate fractions. When they have the same denominators, they're easy to add, but when I have to find the lowest common denominator, the numbers get swirly, and I can't remember where they go. I start drawing cartoons in the margins, or thinking about how nice it would be to have ice cream, and by then time's up and I've failed my math test. Mrs. Zltowsky says that just because

Now, though, Karina was giving me That Look—you know, like I was some stupid little kid. I raised my eyebrows at her. "What?" I said. "I'm serious. Why would Sheba Lee steal your necklace?"

"Taz," Karina said to me, "I saw her do it. Maybe she thinks she'll look even more like me if she steals my stuff and wears it. Besides, she's a liar. She stole your jacket at school that one time, remember?"

I frowned. "Wasn't that an accident?"

"We don't really know, do we?" Karina said. "We called her on it before she got out of the school." She ran her fingers through her hair. "Look, I know it's mean, but Sheba Lee's just...weird."

Come on, ladies! Focus! Focus!" said Ms. Gershwin. "We're going to run through that one more time."

Everybody groaned. We had been dancing for more than an hour without stopping for a water break, and I felt like my legs had turned into Jell-O. "Now that's not very nice, Ms. Gershwin!" Karina said. More than a few of the other girls smiled gratefully at her. It was one of the reasons that everybody liked Karina. She was never afraid to warmly and politely tell a grown-up that she wasn't being very nice.

Ms. Gershwin eyed us hawkishly. "The recital is in four months' time," she said to Karina. "There's not going to be any more nice. Now come on, let's do this. Sheba Lee, would you do another demo for us?" She deftly switched on the CD player as Sheba Lee stepped forward.



In math class, in the cafeteria, on the school bus, Sheba Lee looked small and thin and knobby-kneed, pale and colorless like an old fading photo. But when she put on ballet slippers, she moved so smoothly that it looked like she was gliding a few inches above the floor. When the music was sad, she danced until we wanted to cry. When the music was happy, she spun and hopped until we wanted to cover our mouths to keep from laughing. Even grouchy old Ms. Gershwin occasionally stopped what she was doing and paused to stare as Sheba Lee leapt and bounded across the room. When Ms. Gershwin cast our roles in the recital, Sheba Lee got the only role with a solo without even auditioning for it. As we knew she would.

Karina winced as we hobbled from the dressing room. "I kept messing up those ballottes..."

"No, you didn't," I said. "Stop being so hard on yourself. Ugh, I have to do this extra math stuff for Mrs. Zltowsky when I get home, but all I want to do is go to sleep—"

"Wait up!" We turned. Sheba Lee was running after us.

Karina grabbed my arm and started walking faster. "Make her go away!"

"You'd better go talk to her about the necklace," I said. "Give her a chance to explain, though." She gave me That Look again. "What?" I said. "Don't be nasty about it."

"She stole it from me, Taz! You're telling me to be nice?"

"Hey." We bristled, turned, and there was Sheba Lee. She squirmed a little in place and forced a wide, toothy smile. It looked like she was trying to grin the way Karina always did, when a test had gone well or she had said something clever. Sheba Lee looked like a lopsided crocodile instead.

"Hey," I said, and we walked away. She followed

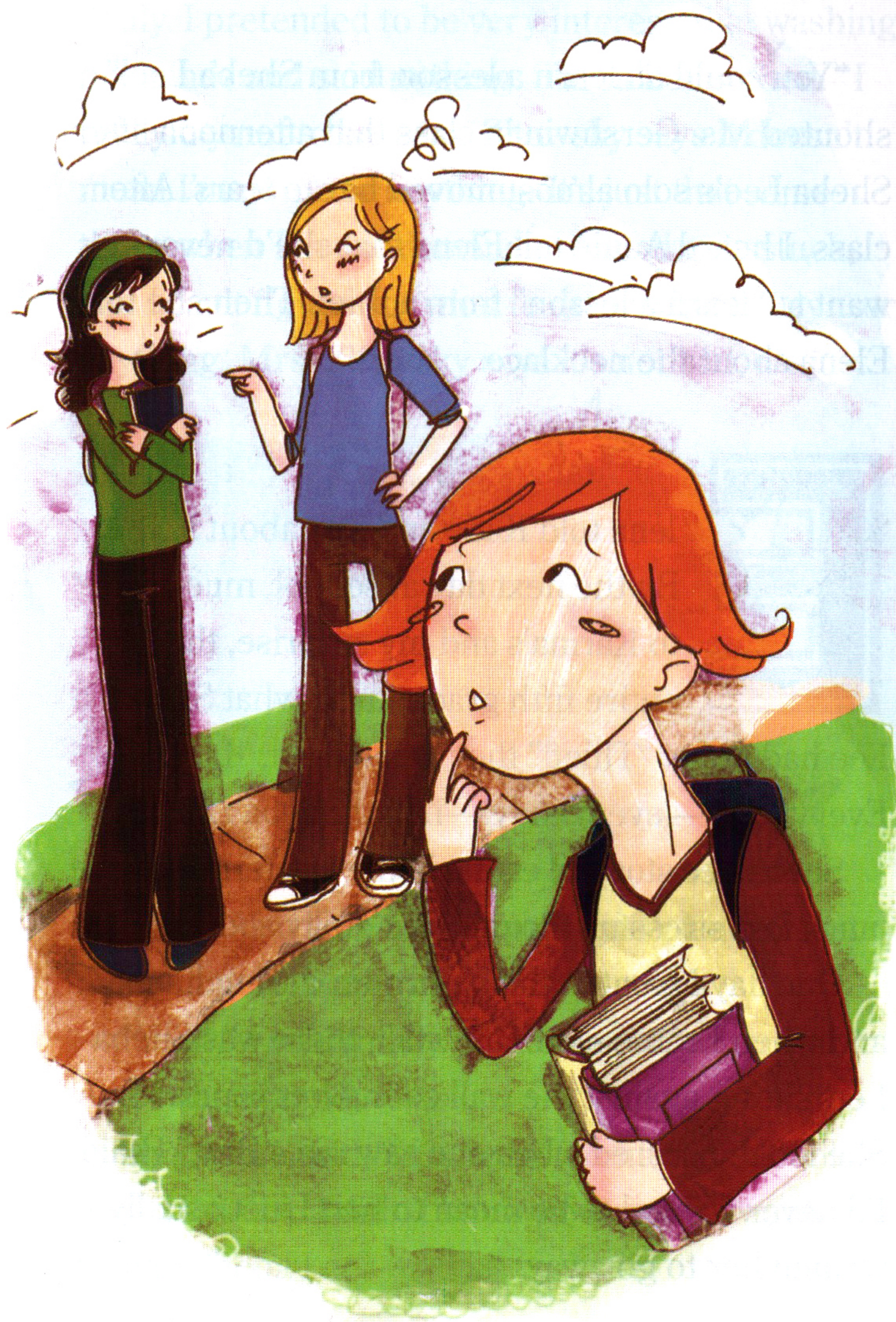
us. "Where're you going?" she asked. "Over to Karina's house?"

"Um," I said, "we don't know yet."

"Oh," said Sheba Lee. She bit her lip, then said, "Well, I really like your house, Karina. Even though it's really small."

Karina stiffened. She was sensitive about her tiny house. Sheba Lee looked like she knew she'd said something wrong, but couldn't quite figure out what it was. "But it's pretty!" she insisted. "We could go there together, guys—"

"Sheba Lee," Karina said slowly, "can we talk in private for a sec?"



"But I saw you take it!"
Karina shouted. Sheba
Lee just turned and ran.

Sheba Lee looked excited as they walked out of earshot. I watched them talk for a while. Then Sheba Lee stopped looking so excited. The color drained out of her pale face. She started to back away. "But I saw you take it!" Karina shouted. Sheba Lee just turned and ran.

"She's such a liar," Karina said to me.

Karina tried to talk to Sheba Lee again after school. This time, Annie and Julia came, too. "Why'd you tell them about the necklace?" I asked Karina.

"I needed backup," she said.

"Backup? What, you make it sound like you're planning to arrest her—"

"You're the one who gave me that necklace, Taz. Do you want her to just run away again? Don't you want me to get it back?"

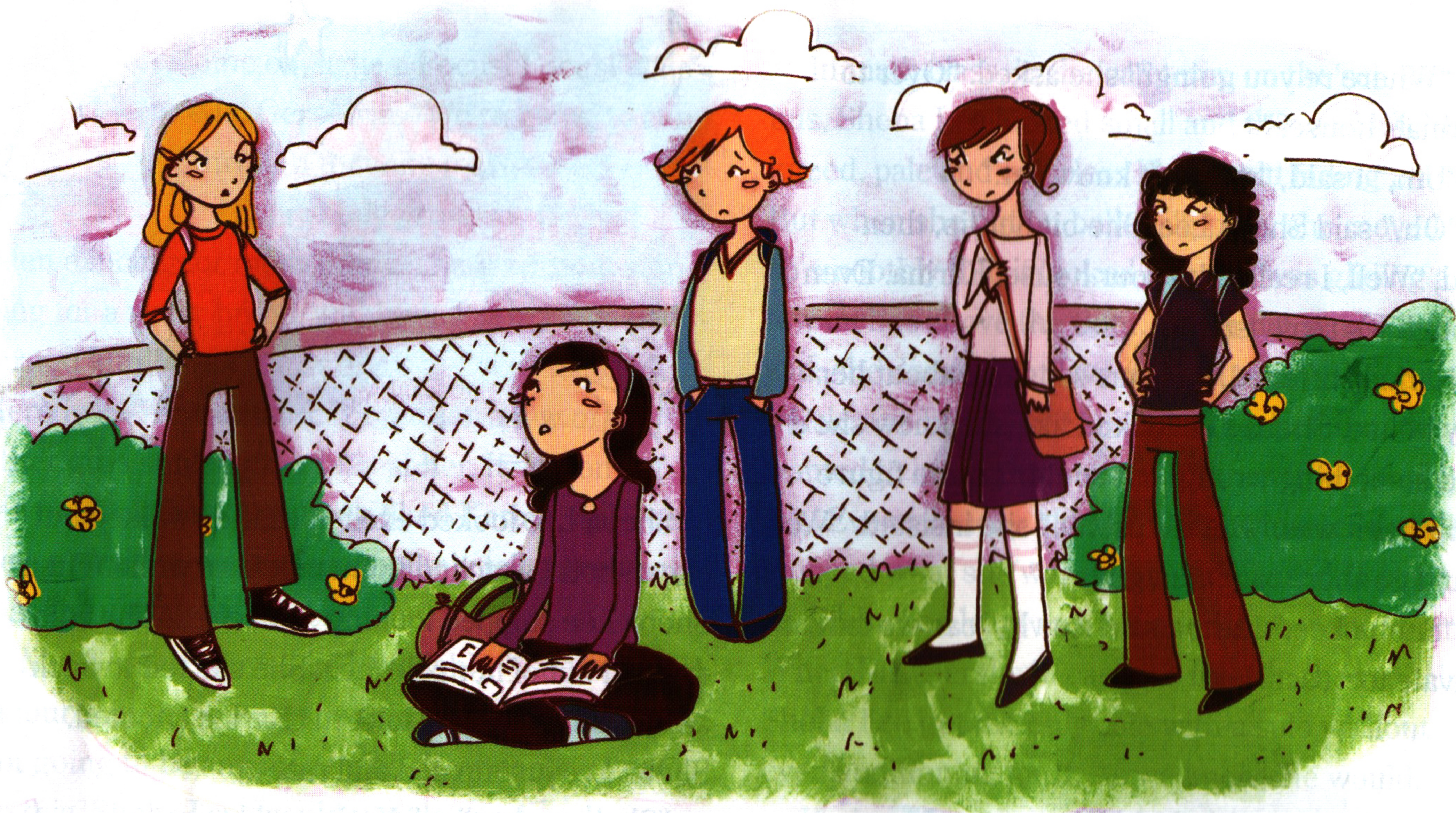
We found Sheba Lee reading by herself behind the four-square courts. "Where is it, Sheba Lee?" asked Julia, planting her hands on her hips.

Sheba Lee blinked. "What? Oh...that."

"Look," said Karina, "I'm not that mad. You just need to give the necklace back, O.K.? It was a gift from Taz. It means a lot to me."

Sheba Lee wouldn't look at us. "I didn't," she whispered. "I...I didn't—"

"Didn't take it?" said Annie, eyes narrowed.



"Well, Karina saw you take it."

"You'll get kicked out of ballet," said Karina.

"But I didn't," Sheba Lee said, fidgeting with the pages of her book. "I didn't."

I couldn't stop staring at Sheba Lee. She kept opening her mouth to cut Karina off, but the words weren't coming out. Then she bit her fist and closed her eyes, and stopped trying to say anything. She looked stuck, like a computer that had suddenly shut down. When I'm doing fractions, I feel the same way.

"Come on, guys, stop it," I said. Karina gave me That Look again, but I didn't care. "Let's go."

That was really mean of me," Karina said as we were changing into our leotards that afternoon. "I shouldn't have confronted Sheba Lee again in front of all of you. It's just..." She forced a hollow laugh. "Why is she making me do this? Why can't she just give it back to me?"

"You could all learn a lesson from Sheba Lee!" shouted Ms. Gershwin in class that afternoon after Sheba Lee's solo almost moved her to tears. After class, I heard Annie tell Elena that she'd never want to "learn a lesson" from a thief. Then she told Elena about the necklace.

Elena told Katie and Sita about it. By the next day at school, much to Karina's and my surprise, the entire fifth grade knew what Sheba Lee had done. "Thief!" they whispered. "Liar!" Everybody—everybody!—hated Sheba Lee!

Sheba Lee stopped eating in the cafeteria. It made lunch less stressful, though I felt guilty about it.

One day I went to the bathroom during lunch, and when I came out of the stall, there was Sheba Lee, sitting against the wall eating her sandwich. She looked scared when she saw me. "Hey," I said. I'd never wanted to be mean to her. I just usually wanted her to go away.

"You get tutored by Mrs. Zltowsky, huh?" she asked abruptly.

I stiffened. I don't like to talk about getting tutored. It makes me feel dumb. "Yeah," I said.

Sheba Lee said, "Me, too. Only on Saturdays, though. I like the funny little chips she gives out. Ooh, what are they called? They're like potato chips, but they sort of look like ghosts, they're really funny-looking..."

"Boo Chips," I said. Mrs. Zltowsky gives them to her students at every tutoring session.

Sheba Lee smiled shyly. "Yeah, Boo Chips." We were quiet for a while, engulfed in one of those awkward silences.

"I know I'm annoying sometimes," she said suddenly. I pretended to be very interested in washing my hands and said nothing. Sheba Lee sighed. "I really try not to be. Mrs. Zltowsky says it doesn't mean I'm dumb or anything. It's just that sometimes when I'm not dancing my head gets stuck, and I can't figure out what to do or what to say...or anything. Mrs. Zltowsky says it's not bad, it's just

**Sheba Lee said,
"You're different,
too. Just like me."**

different. You know?" Her pale eyes pleaded for me to understand.

"Yeah," I said finally. "I know what you mean." And I did, sort of.

Sheba Lee said, "You're different, too. Just like me." I left fast. I didn't know how much I wanted to be like Sheba Lee.



At the end of math class the next day, Mr. Li cleared his throat and said, "I'm passing back your tests now. Overall, you guys did pretty well."

My stomach caved. Karina caught my eye and gave me a thumbs-up. "I'm sure you did fine," she whispered. "You've been studying really hard with Mrs. Zltowsky."

Mr. Li approached my desk. "Please see me after class," he said quietly, handing the test back to me facedown. I flipped it over. The page was swarming with circles and slashes of red ink.

Karina was looking at me. I met her eyes and



shook my head, shielding the test with my arms. She nodded and looked away.

I wiped my eyes, shoved the test into my backpack, and walked out of the classroom before Mr. Li or Karina could stop me. As long as I didn't cry until I was alone, I'd be O.K.

"Hey, Taz!" yelled Sheba Lee.

I pretended I didn't hear and walked faster. She caught up. "I saw your grade," she said.

I stopped. "What?"

"I...I didn't mean to. I saw it when Mr. Li handed it back."

"I have to go," I said, and walked away.

Sheba Lee practically ran to keep up with me. "It's O.K. Not everyone is smart. Some people are dumb at math, but that's O.K.—"

"What did you just say?" I said, stopping. She had that look on her face again, like she knew that she'd said something wrong, but for the life of her couldn't figure out what it was. She looked confused and scared. Good.

"It's O.K. You're just different. Like me," she said.

"Get away from me, you liar," I said, starting to cry. She was gone.

On Monday, Ms. Gershwin was in a terrible mood. She announced that Sheba Lee had decided to take classes at a different dance studio, and that her role in the recital was now open. Later that week, we found out that Sheba Lee had also changed schools. She wouldn't be coming back.

"She's gone," Karina sighed.

"I hated her," I said instantly. "She was a liar."

"And she never even returned my necklace," said Karina. "What a freak."

The auditions for Sheba Lee's role came and went. Karina didn't get the part, and neither did I. "Sheba Lee was a good dancer, but she didn't deserve all that special treatment from Ms. Gershwin," Karina said as we packed up in the dressing room, rummaging through her gym bag for her brush. "She was just...oh, no."

"What?" I asked.

Karina looked up from her gym bag. She looked ready to throw up. The necklace was in her hand.

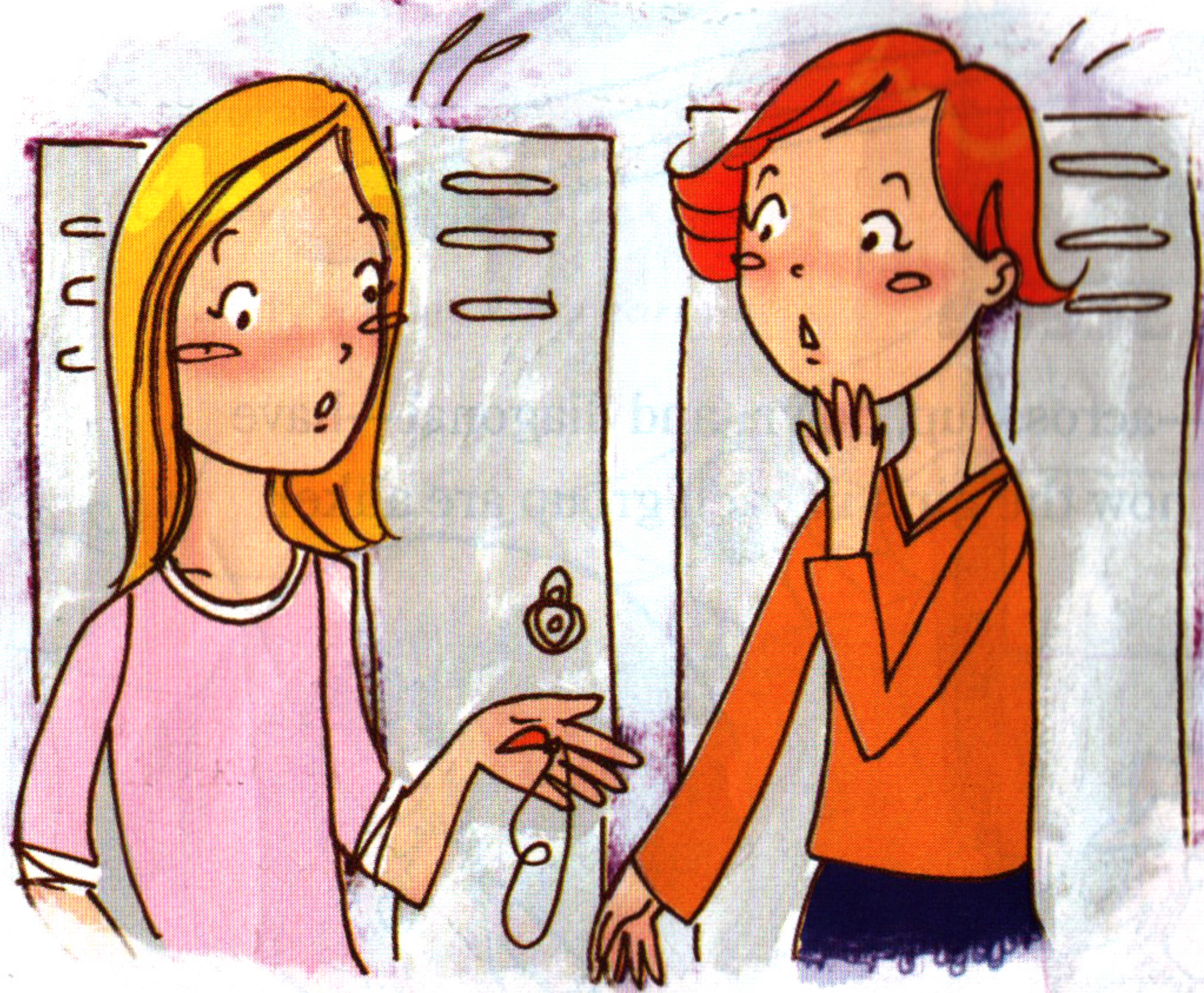
I swallowed. "How long has that been in there?"

"Um," she stammered, "I-I don't know, I..."

"I thought you said you saw Sheba Lee take it!"

"I did! I...I thought I did." Karina covered her

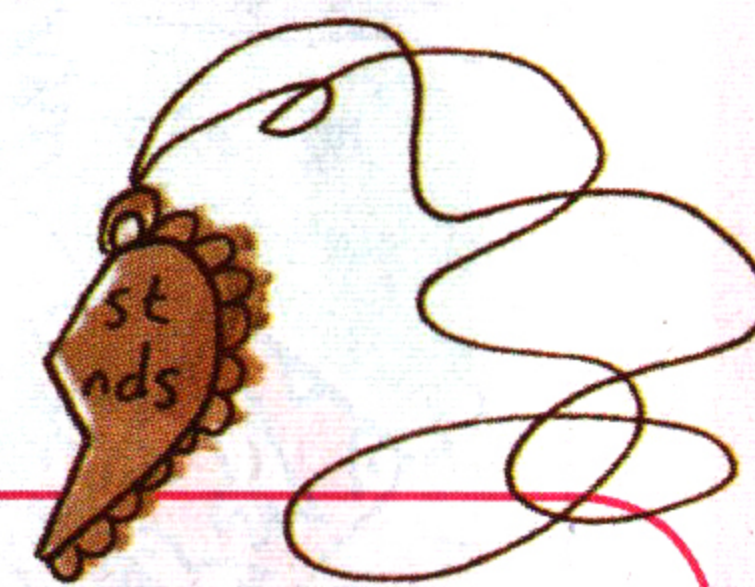
mouth with her hand and sat down. "I think I've made a really, really huge mistake," she said. I couldn't say anything.



After class, we walked down to the card shop and bought Sheba Lee a postcard of three girls dancing together. We explained everything, invited her back to Ms. Gershwin's, and said that we were very, very sorry. "Well, mistakes happen," Karina said halfheartedly as she dropped the card into the mailbox. I gave her That Look, and she was quiet. Then her eyes lit up. "Look! Over there!"

Across the street at the drugstore was Sheba Lee. She was buying candy with two other girls. One of them said something to her, and Sheba Lee laughed. Then the other girls started laughing with her.

Sheba Lee looked so happy. Karina moved to wave, but I caught her arm. "Don't," I said. "I don't think Sheba Lee wants us anymore." And we watched her walk happily away. ★



Meet the Author



Teresa Cotsirilos

Whenever I write about being 10, I usually end up calling some of my old friends from the Berkeley Piranhas, the soccer team I played on from third through eighth grade. A few of the characters in this story are roughly based on people who were on that team. I'm still friends with some of them, too!

Brainwaves

activities and puzzles

Halloween Scene

The trick-or-treaters in each row or column—across, up, down, and diagonal—have something in common. Can you figure out how the girls in each group are alike?



Photo Fun

Look at this picture and try to figure out which girl is which!

Mycah is wearing something on her head.

Laura is not wearing makeup.

Camryn is wearing black lipstick.

Caity has big hoop earrings.

We need your
fun photos!
Send them to Brain
Waves at the address on
page 2, and we might
use one in a **puzzle.**
Sorry, photos can't be
returned.

no	no	no	yes	Mycah
yes	no	no	no	Caity
no	no	yes	no	Laura
no	yes	no	no	Camryn

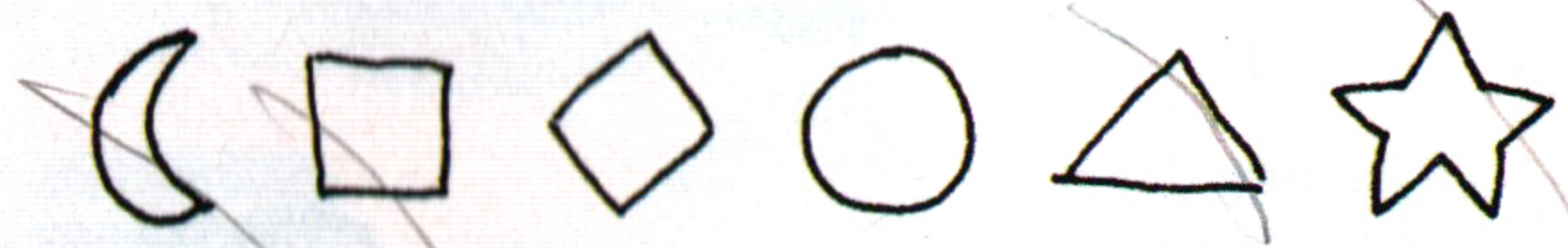
Patch Problem



Maggie bought a big pumpkin for \$17.77.
She paid with four bills and seven coins.
Name which bills and coins she used.

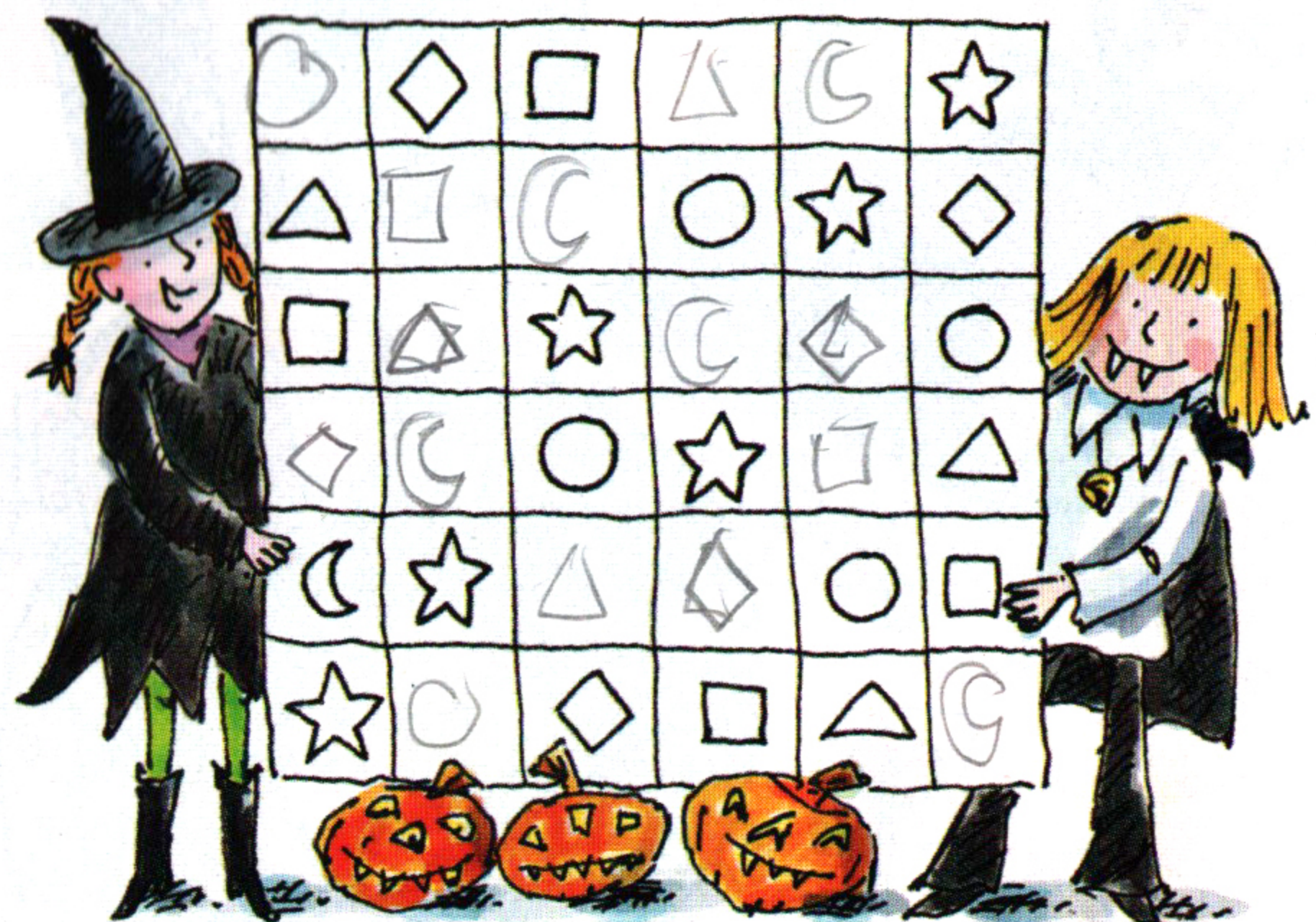
Spooky Shapes

Fill each empty box with one
of these shapes:



No shape can appear more than
once in each row or column.

(Diagonals don't count.)



Ghostly Towns

Four of these spooky town names are made up, but the rest are real!

Find the ten real town names in the puzzle below.

~~Battiest~~, Oklahoma

Boo, Florida

Death Valley, California

Devils Lake, North Dakota

EEK, Alaska

Haunted Hollow, Connecticut

Magic City, Texas

Monsterburg, Illinois

Oddville, Kentucky

Peculiar, Missouri

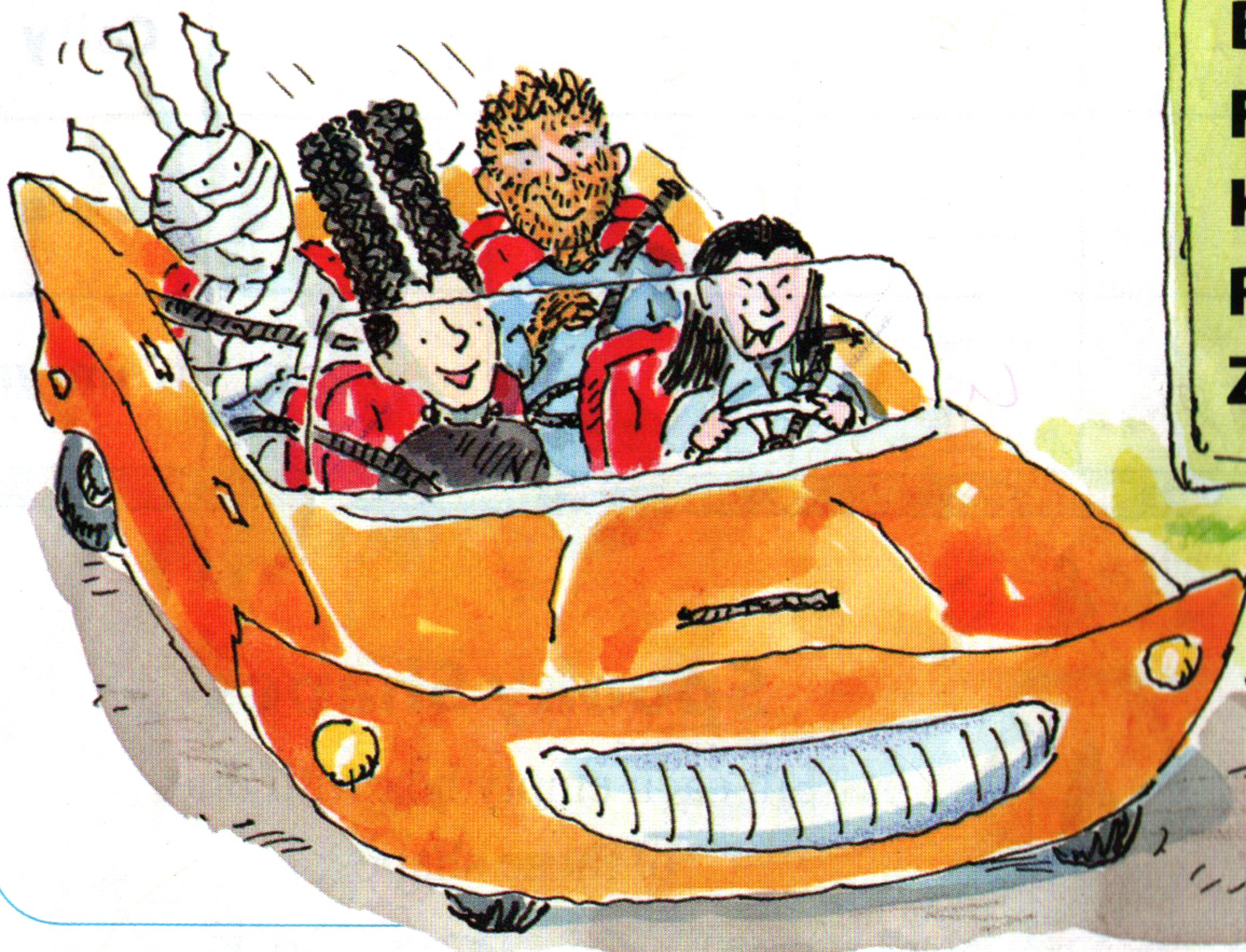
Shrieking Heights, Colorado

~~Tombstone~~, Arizona

~~Webb~~, Iowa

~~Yellville~~, Arkansas

A Y M E T O M B S T O N E U
R S A K W S I P N K J A L R
S M G A L Y E L L V I L L E
N G I L T C V I O C E D I K
X R C S U W H K T Y L O V N
B E C L A R E C H T I K D E
F J I I O E W P N M A O D L
K A T V R B J H W E B B O A
R W Y E L L A V H T A E D I
Z H E D I C N D E S R U X C



Art Sleuth

Search the pages of this issue to find where each snippet of the photo or illustration shown to the left came from. Write down where you found it.





Laffateria

What did the mama ghost say to the little ghost before they drove off?



"Fasten your sheet belt."

Kentzie P.
Age 12, Ohio

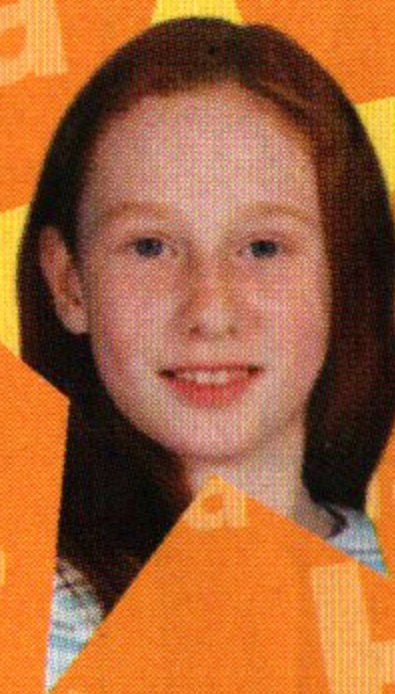
What kind of monster can dance the best?



The Boogie Man!

Gabi M.
Age 12, Pennsylvania

Why do spiders make such great baseball players?



Because they catch so many flies!

Taylor A.
Age 12, New York

Why didn't the skeleton dance at the party?



Because he had no body to dance with.

Kiara J.
Age 10, Georgia

What does a mummy mom say to her naughty mummy child?



"Go to your tomb."

Grace L.
Age 10, Virginia

Knock-knock!
Who's there?
Boo!
Boo who?



Sorry I made you cry!

Maddie L.
Age 11, Wisconsin

What do witches wear to bed?



Frightgowns

Karmell J.
Age 12, Nevada

Why is it so easy to fool vampires?



Because they're suckers.

Angie L.
Age 11, Pennsylvania

Why don't skeletons go to scary movies?



They don't have the guts.

Nicole H.
Age 10, Maryland

What kind of fruit does a ghost love?



Boo berries

Audra K.
Age 13, South Dakota

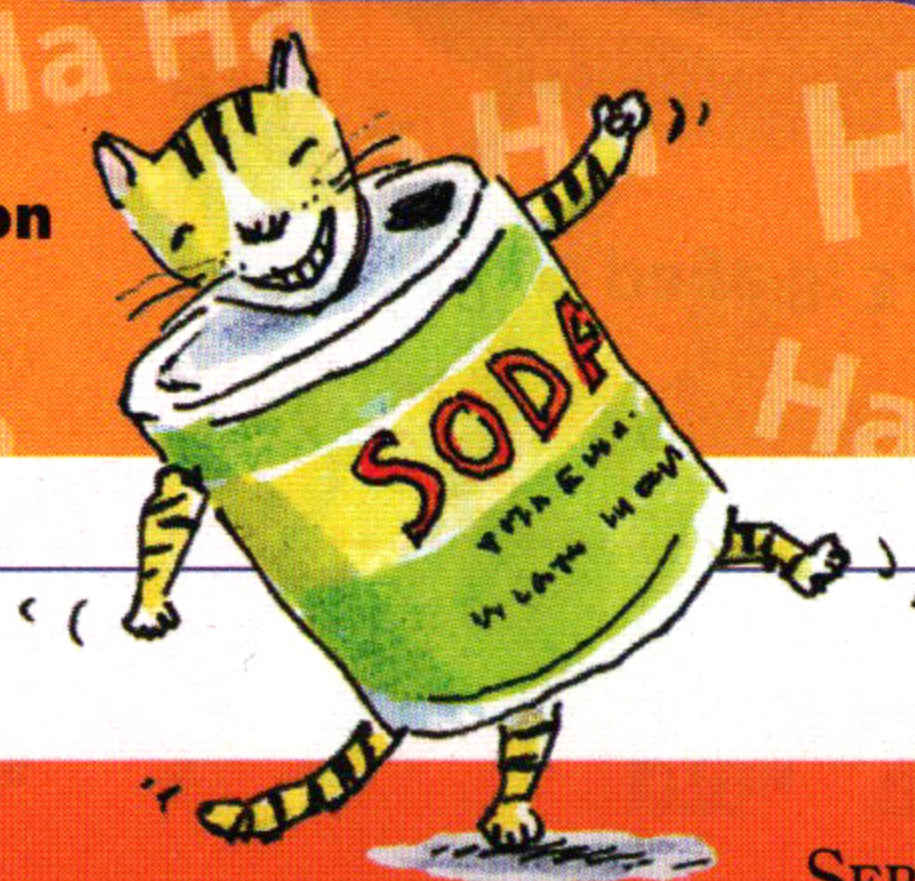
What did King Tut say when he was scared?



"I want my mummy!"

Nina C.
Age 12, Washington

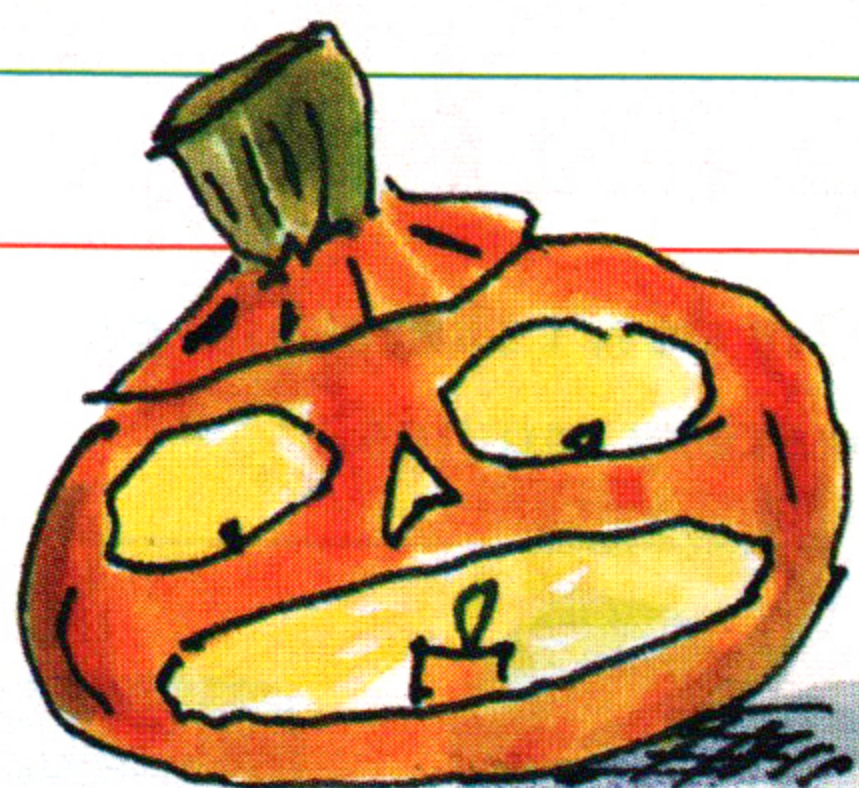
Funny Business
Send your best joke to Brain Waves! Write to the address on page 2. Include your name, birth date, school photo, and signature.



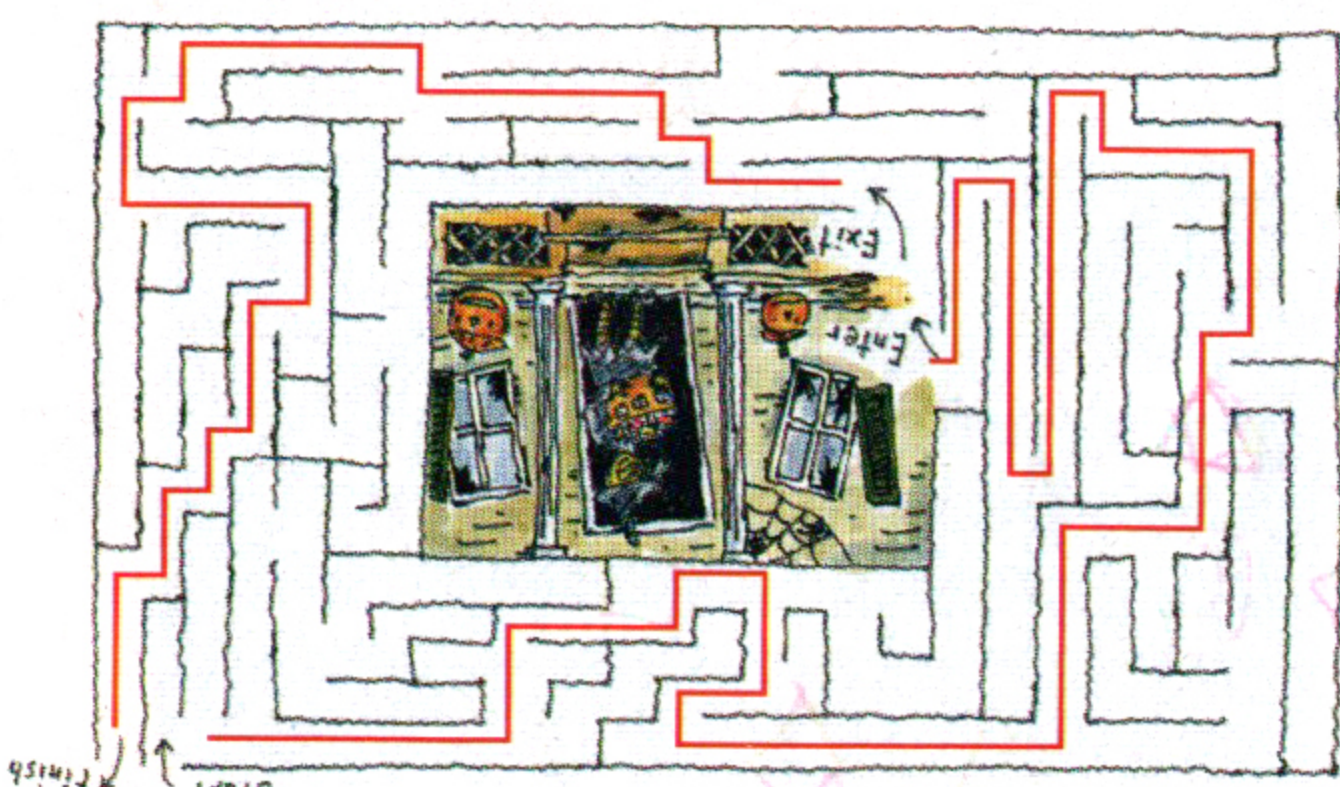


Tricky Treats

Find your way into—and out of—this haunted house.



Girls Express
The buzzword, chockablock, is on page 14.



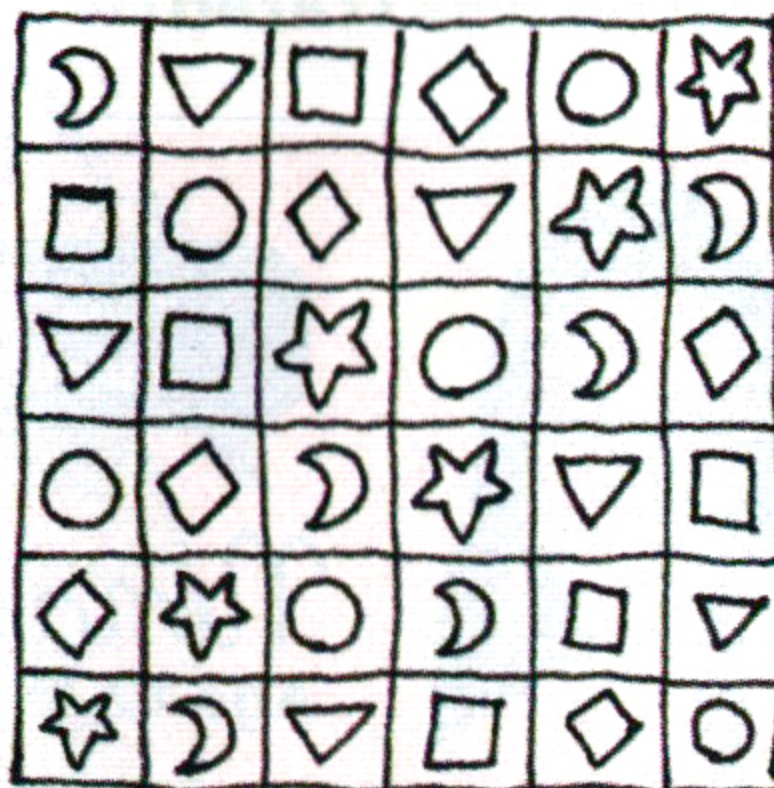
Art Sleuth
1. page 22; 2. page 8; 3. page 3
Tricky Treats

Answer Box

A Y M E T O M B S T O N E U
R S A K W S I P N K J A L R
S M G A L V E L L V I L L E
N G I L T C V I O C E D I K
X R C S U W H K T Y L O V N
B E C L A R E C H T I K D E
F J I I O E W P N M A O D L
K A T V R B J H W E B B O A
R W Y E L L A V H T A E D I
Z H E D I C N D E S R U X C

The made-up towns are Boo, Haunted Hollow, Monsterburg, and Shrieking Heights.

Ghostly Towns



Spooky Shapes



From left to right, the girls are Caitly, Camryn, Laura, and Mycah. Maggie needs one \$10 bill, one \$5 bill, two \$1 bills, two quarters, two dimes, one nickel, and two pennies.

Patch Problem

Photo Fun

Top row, red shoes; middle row, glasses; bottom row, animal tails; left column, treat bags; middle column, hats; right column, flash-lights; diagonal from top left, capes; diagonal from top right, braids

Halloween Scene



American
Girl



To: _____
From: _____



American
Girl

Friends
Today,
friends
FOR EVER

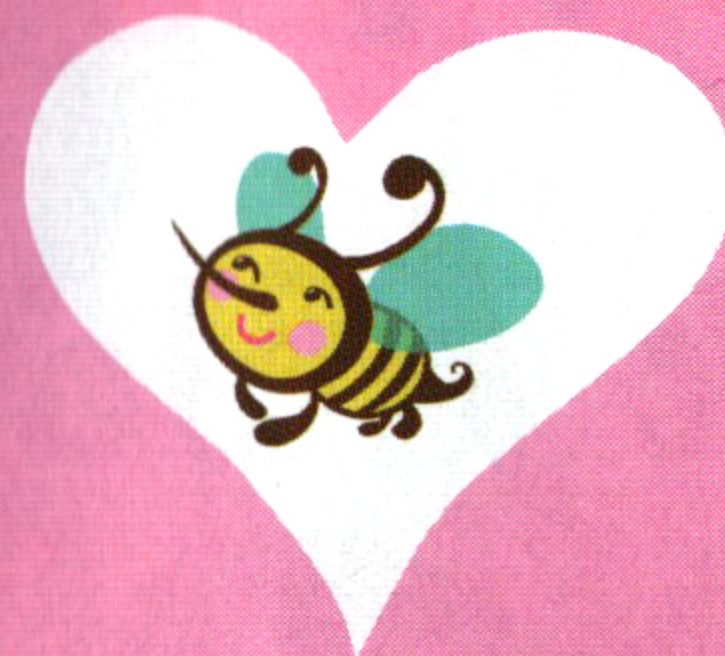


You & I
will
stick
TOGETHER!

American
Girl

To: _____

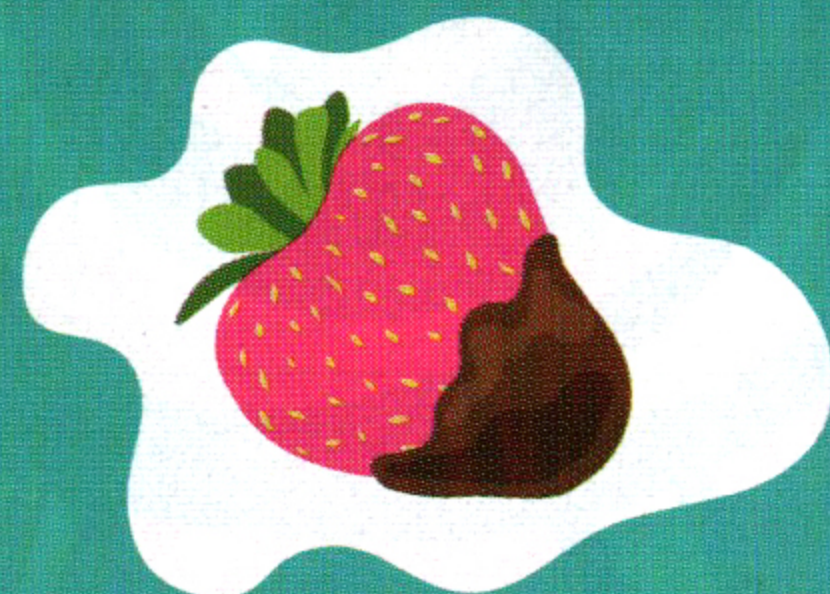
From: _____



Illustrations: Helen Dardik

To: _____

From: _____



Smile!

You Have
a Friend Who
Loves You!



American
Girl

Illustrations: Helen Dardik

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I am really busy. I do violin, soccer, piano, and baseball. I feel like I should quit one of them, but I want to do everything! What should I do?

Busy

It's great to be interested in so many things, but just because you *can* do them all doesn't mean you *should*. If your schedule is only busy for a few weeks, take a deep breath and get through it. But if it's crazy all the time and makes you unhappy, something needs to change. Talk to a parent and figure out what makes sense for you.



Dear American Girl,

I'm always scared when I see a scary movie or show on TV. I end up getting up in the middle of the night and sleeping on the floor in my mom's room. How can I not be a scaredy-cat?

Scared in Virginia

You know the frightening scenes in movies are fake, but special effects make them seem real. When you see something upsetting, it can stick



with you for a long time. So instead of trying not to be scared of scary things (which is really hard!), it might be better to avoid watching frightening stuff in the first place. If you're tempted to watch a scary show, remember how freaked out you'll feel later. If you know you'll regret watching it—don't.



Dear American Girl,

At school, when I am taking a test, I see people looking at my paper. I know the teacher is busy, so I don't want to tell her.

tested

Concentrate on taking your test, but make it harder for people to see your paper. Use a cover sheet for your answers if that is allowed, and flip your test over when you're

done. If you are sure that you still see people cheating, you should tell the teacher after class so that she can watch for it during the next test. Then let it go and focus on getting the best grade you can.



Dear American Girl,

My best friend and I got into a fight. It was a misunderstanding, but she doesn't believe me. So she stopped talking to me and told all of her other friends about it, and now no one likes me.

What should I do?

Misunderstood

You and your friend need to talk. Doing it in person is best. You can even get a parent or teacher to help. However the misunderstanding happened, it sounds like you did something to upset your friend. Think about it from her point of view, and be honest—do you owe her an apology? The words "I'm really sorry" can make a huge difference. Once you two are not fighting anymore, chances are her other friends will start being nicer to you.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I eat too much candy! Every time my mom and I go to the store, I always want candy. What should I do?

Candy fanatic

Eating candy is O.K., but too much is not good for you. Ask your mom for help. You two can agree ahead of time not to buy any candy, and if you're tempted once you get to the store, she can say no. Also, the checkout lanes are loaded with candy, so read a magazine or help unload the cart instead of staring at the sweets while you're there. At home, ask Mom to keep candy out of sight. Otherwise, every time you see it, you'll want some. These tricks should help you tame your sweet tooth!



Dear American Girl,

I have a problem. They were picking teams at an after-school event. I made the team and my friend didn't. She is really upset. I don't know what to do or say. Can you help?

Confused



Don't feel guilty. Say something like, "I know you're upset. I wish you had made the team, too. It would've been more fun to play together." Listen to what she has to say, and know that she'll feel better eventually. For now, your kindness should keep it from becoming a sore spot in your friendship.



Dear American Girl,

Sometimes my little cousins want to play with me. However, they like to play tea party and babyish things like that. If I say no, they'll be sad and I'll get in trouble. What do I do?

helpless

To your cousins, it's a treat to play with a "big girl" like you. Of course

they're disappointed when you refuse. So be patient and play with them for just a little while. If a tea party isn't your thing, dig out some old toys or games you enjoyed when you were their age, or do an easy craft together. Your family will love the fact that you're being a great cousin, and who knows? You may even have fun.



Advice from You

"I have advice for girls who play instruments. When you practice, play the harder songs first and your favorite songs last. Then it won't be such a drag. And if you are frustrated with a song you're trying to play, come back to it later. Practicing won't be so boring anymore!"

Anna P.

Age 13, Illinois

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!

American Girl magazine

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Because Vivianna looked great in so many outfits at our cover shoot, it was hard to pick just one favorite shot for the cover. Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to see other choices and vote for your favorite!



Still having trouble getting ready on time? Try setting your morning to music. Make a mix of your favorite songs that's as long as the time you have to get ready in the morning. That way, if you're supposed to be eating breakfast by track seven and you're still brushing your hair, you'll know that it's time to pick up the pace!

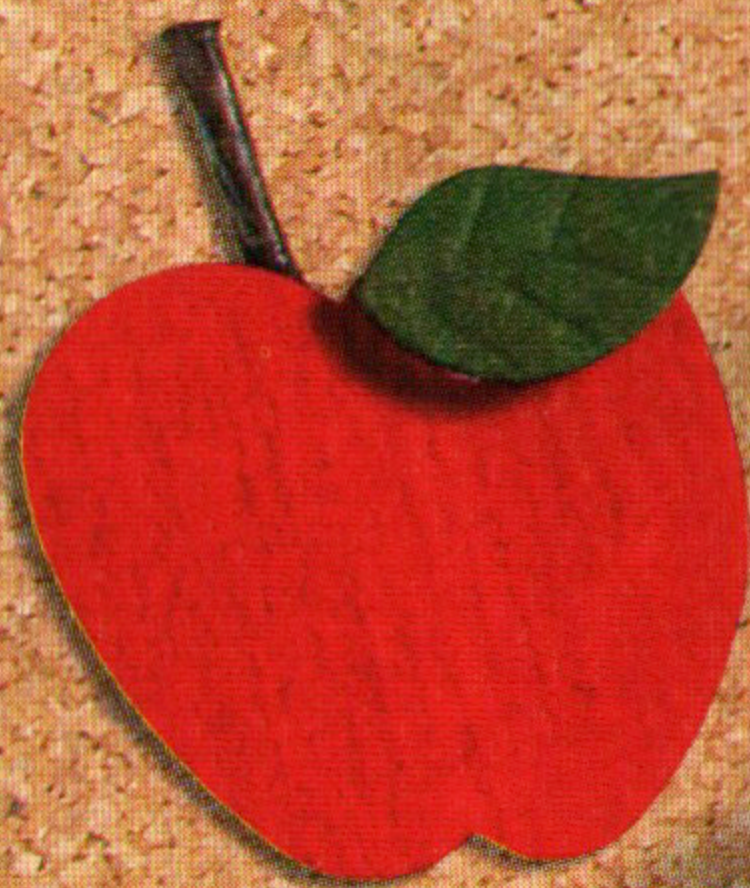
Planning on hosting the Ghoul Café for your friends? Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to print out a boo-tiful invitation.



Behind the Scenes

The leaves are falling, the weather is cool...we at AG love back to school!

Morgan and Ellie T., ages 13 and 10, of Wisconsin, had a great idea after they read "Get Organized" in the March/April issue. They made mini magazine holders out of mini cereal boxes for mini mags!



We thought these teacher and student pencils from Milina K., age 12, made the grade. Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to see even more clever pencils!



Best Friends

Girls like you tell about the friends who helped them when they needed it most.

Front-Page News

Find out who won our cover contest and see their ideas for the magazine.



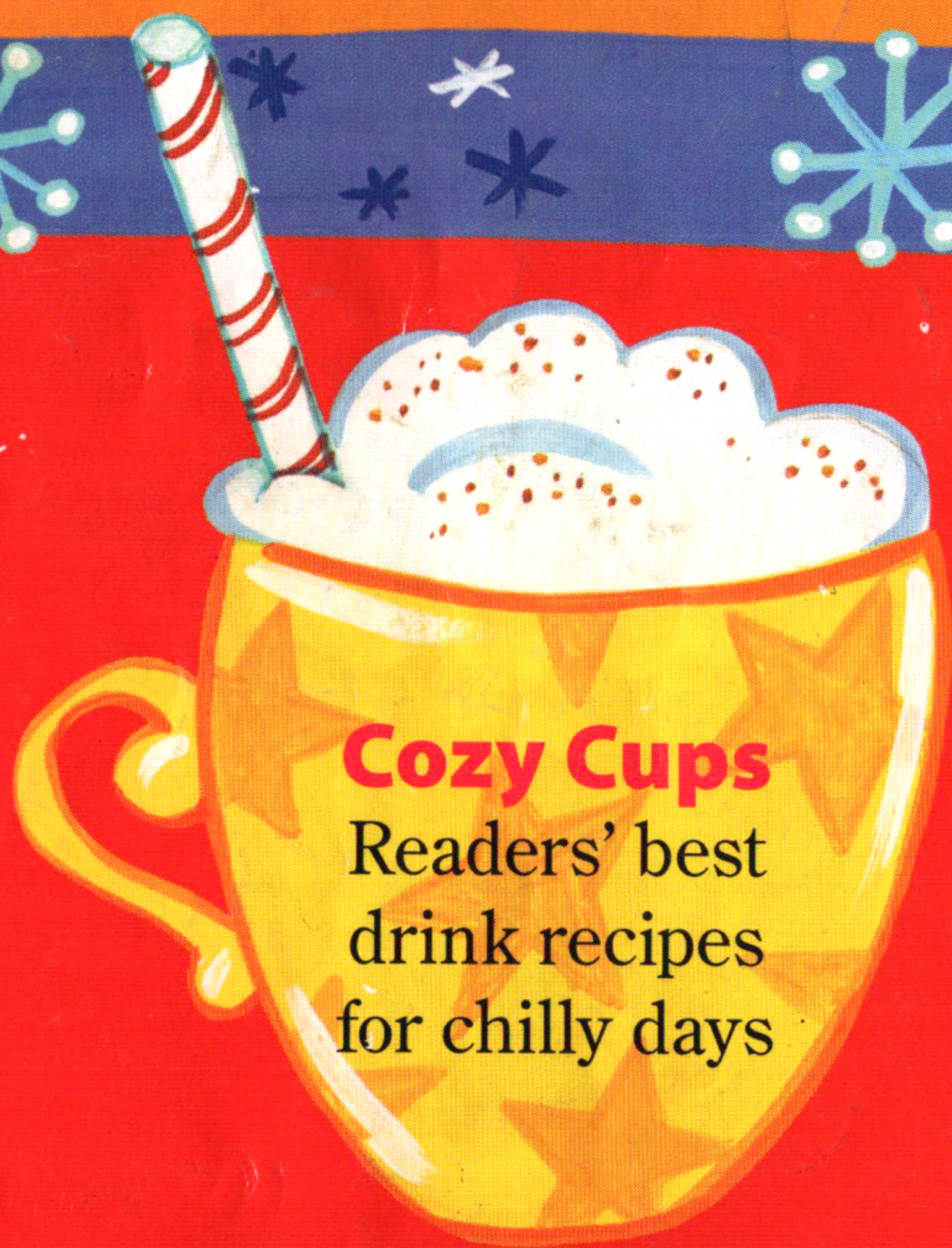
American Girl

Coming up in the November/
December issue

For more fun, visit
americangirl.com and
click on "Magazine."
Get great school
tips!

Cozy Cups

Readers' best
drink recipes
for chilly days



Poetry Pages

See the winners of our poetry contest!



Holiday Mishaps

Funny tales about things that didn't go
quite right at the holidays

Goody Bags

Holiday gifts to make and share with
everyone on your list!

